The Nation

FOUNDED 1865

Vol. CXXXII NEW YORK, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 3, 1931 No. 3439

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Subscription Rates: Five dollars per annum postpaid in the United States and Mexico; to Canada, $5.50; and to foreign countries of the Postal Union, $6.00.

THE NATION, No. 20 Vesey Street, New York City, Cable Address: Nation, New York. British Agent of Subscriptions and Advertising, Miss Gertrude M. Cross, 23 Brunswick Square, London, W. C. 1, England.

DISAPPOINTING and disheartening is the five to four decision of the Supreme Court in barring Dr. Douglas C. Macintosh, a former Canadian war chaplain, and Miss M. A. Bland, a former nurse with the American army in France, from citizenship because of their refusal to swear that they would bear arms in defense of the country. Dr. Macintosh declared that he did not wish to put his conscience in the keeping of a Congress; he might go to war again, but he wished to reserve the decision for himself. Particularly disappointing is the fact that the new justice, Owen J. Roberts, sided with the reactionaries of the court, especially as Chief Justice Hughes joined Justices Stone, Brandeis, and Holmes in dissenting. Had Justice Roberts voted with them, the United States would have taken a memorable step forward in exalting the right of conscience in checking the steady infringement of the modern state upon the liberties of its citizenship. At least we must express our unreserved gratitude to Mr. Hughes; we should be delighted, indeed, if history should have the privilege of recording him as a great liberal Chief Justice. Meanwhile, we do not give up hope that this decision will be reversed. Others as important have been. Moreover, there are increasing numbers of Americans within the citizenry of this country who will refuse in the event of another war to put their consciences in pawn and will prefer jail to taking part in any mass murder under whatever sanction or however unctuously justified by those who wish to prove America's supremacy by force.

THE REFUSAL of the Board of Trustees of Ohio State University to renew its annual contract with Professor Herbert Adolphus Miller, of the department of sociology, raises a straight issue of academic freedom. Not in years has the question whether a professor shall have the right to call his soul his own been so clearly presented. It is therefore of the utmost importance to every teacher in the United States. The grounds of Professor Miller's offense are two: that he made a speech in India to the followers of Gandhi in which he said that public opinion in the United States was eagerly watching the Gandhi experiment; and that he was one of the leaders in the recent agitation to abolish compulsory military training at the university. It is the latter offense which bulks largest. On Thursday, May 14, as we reported in *The Nation* of May 27, the faculty of Ohio State voted by 83 to 79 to ask the Board of Trustees to make military drill optional. Five days later President Rightmire called another meeting for consideration of the vote. By 141 to 64 the faculty then reversed its position, but only after a resolution had been introduced in the House of Representatives calling for a legislative investigation of "those faculty members supporting the optional-drill movement," and after Colonel Grosvenor Townsend, head of the force of fifty-two regular army officers and non-commissioned officers detailed to the university, had made an address in which he denounced as Communist the undergraduate opposition to compulsory drill.

THE STUDENTS' PETITION against compulsory drill, signed by 700 undergraduates, having been forwarded to the trustees, the board promptly rejected it and declared that since the university "was established for the purpose of enlarging and enriching the lives of those who might avail themselves of the opportunities it offers," therefore the board saw no reason to change this requirement of compulsion to military drill. It further opined that

> The board feels that the university should not be subjected to emotional criticism because of the unripe vociferations of a small group of students and a very few members of the faculty, who are under no compulsion to come here and under none to remain unless they can subscribe to the fundamental purposes of this university.

This was followed by a statement from the president blaming certain members of the teaching staff for failing "to exert the sane and wholesome influence on the students which members of the faculty have the opportunity to exercise." He then evidenced his complete unfitness for the position he holds by writing in conclusion: "A great university is here within our grasp if we will attend only to the big worth-while projects, and put first things first." In any other country, we believe, a university head who failed to see that academic freedom is the most precious thing in the life of any university could not hold his place a week.

PRESIDENT HOOVER has again refused to call an emergency session of Congress to work out an adequate program for unemployment relief. In his statement to the

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press he admitted that the public demand for such a session has been growing, but he contended that "we cannot legislate ourselves out of a world economic depression." Mr. Hoover misstates the issue. The question has nothing to do with a possible solution of the world's economic problems; it concerns itself solely with the responsibility of the American government to the American people. Six million persons and their dependents are in distress because of unemployment. Other millions are faced with increasing difficulties because of their sharply reduced incomes. Private charity, Mr. Hoover's pet method of relief, has not done enough; the greater part of the burden has been thrown upon municipal and county governments. The municipalities themselves may not be able to carry the load much longer; they are finding it difficult to collect taxes; their deficits are growing. Congress can help by getting to work immediately. It would then have time to put a comprehensive and adequate program into operation before cold weather comes. A program of this sort, as Senator La Follette has pointed out, could and should provide for financial assistance to cities and States in extending direct relief, for an extensive public-works program, for workable farm-relief legislation, reduction of the tariff, increases in the income- and inheritance-tax rates to finance public construction and direct relief, and legislation to create a national economic council to assist in stabilizing industry and agriculture. If this is not done, and we pass through another hard winter which may be marked by hunger riots and other disturbances, the blame will be almost exclusively with Mr. Hoover.

PLAIN TALK ON BUSINESS becomes commoner as the depression drags its length along. At the recent meeting of the American Iron and Steel Institute Charles M. Schwab, optimist-in-chief to the American people, exuded his usual bright hopes for the future, only to be followed by James A. Farrell, president of the United States Steel Corporation, who, speaking extemporaneously, after agreeing with Mr. Schwab, delivered himself of these homely remarks:

> I am not going to mention the names of all of the companies in this room that have cut wages; I do not want to embarrass them; but I think it is a pretty cheap sort of business [to cut wages 10 per cent on a three-day week].
>
> There is not a single line in the steel business today, in my opinion, where there is an adequate cost return on finished materials.
>
> I said a year ago . . . that if this thing kept on I doubted if any steel manufacturers in the United States could earn a dividend on common stock. I say now at present prices they are not earning dividends on preferred stock.

So it went throughout Mr. Farrell's denunciations of his business associates for cutting prices under stress of depression. But the next day, speaking over the radio on behalf of the National Foreign Trade Council, Mr. Farrell cooed as softly as any sucking dove: "I am convinced that our worst experiences are behind us and that we are gradually entering upon a period of increasing trade activity." What happened overnight?

THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY raised an issue of first-class importance in his radio address on May 23, when he hinted at a broader base for the income tax, and looked in the fiscally sound but socially doubtful direction of increased taxes on lower incomes, and of taxes ultimately paid by people on the basis of their consumption, not of their wealth. If it ever comes to pass that Mr. Mellon makes specific proposals, they will need the most careful scrutiny in the light not alone of their revenue results, but of their economic consequences. Too many of Mr. Mellon's tax ideas have presented weird features in the past and, despite his reputation among business men, too many of his suggestions have been disproved or falsified to make it possible to give him a free hand. In his address Mr. Mellon admitted that there will be a deficit in 1932 as well as the terrific one this year. Instead of asking directly for higher taxes, however, he demanded a "better-balanced" system of revenue. He suggests that the wide variations in federal revenue are due to our too great reliance on the individual income tax in its present form, under which 97 per cent of income-tax receipts come from the 380,000 persons having incomes above $10,000. He rightly criticizes our treatment of capital gains and losses in the income tax as greatly increasing the fluctuation of receipts with the rise and fall of the stock market. But he offers no specific proposals of tax change whatsoever; perhaps he will let us have them later.

STATEMENTS THAT FILIPINO political leaders have abandoned their demand for immediate independence should be received with something more than caution, in view of the variety and complexity of the economic interests involved in the question. American beet-sugar growers in recent years have had a sudden access of enthusiasm for human liberty in the Philippines, in view of the marked progress made in the American market by Philippine sugar under the free admission that it now enjoys, and their sentiments are shared by producers of dairy products and cotton, who have also felt the breath of Philippine competition. On the other hand, Americans with capital invested in the sugar fields and the other industries of the islands naturally feel keenly the dangers to the Filipinos involved in turning them loose in a world filled with wicked Japanese and other people eager to gobble up rich and "unprotected" tropical islands, to say nothing of the unreadiness of the Filipinos to manage their own affairs. In view of the renewed anti-independence propaganda, welcome to an Administration that regards independence as "an injustice to the people," there is special interest in the new Philippine nationalist movement launched some months ago by Manuel Roxas, speaker of the Philippine legislature, which proposes "to take the course that we should take were we independent." It intends, in a word, to develop a self-sufficient national economic life as far as possible, evidently with a view to lessening the dependence on the United States fostered by the growth of industries that depend on the free-trade American market. This is answer enough, perhaps, to the statement that the Filipinos do not want independence.

POLAND HAS BEEN severely censured by Foreign Minister Henderson of England, sitting as president of the League of Nations Council, for its attitude toward the dispute over the German minority in Upper Silesia. Last January the Council instructed Poland to answer the complaint of Germany concerning the treatment of German citizens during the November elections. Warsaw delayed filing

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its report until four days before the Council's session was to end, and then demanded that it be accepted as it stood. For this Poland was rebuked by Mr. Henderson speaking "in the name of the League." He took the Polish representative to task for delaying the report, declared he did not know whether the report satisfied all the Council's demands, and added that Poland could not be absolved of responsibility for future developments in Upper Silesia if the Council refused to accept the report without further examination. Consideration of the report was put over until September. The Council submitted to the World Court a dispute between Danzig and Poland over the treatment accorded Polish residents of the free city. Rumors had arisen that Poland planned to send a police force into Danzig to protect its citizens, and this alarmed both Danzig and Germany, the latter because it hopes some day to see Danzig restored as a German city and therefore looks with undisguised disfavor upon any attempt of Poland to encroach upon its independence. Instead of sending policemen to Danzig, however, Poland sent a strong protest to Geneva, and the Council at once referred the dispute to The Hague.

THREE ALIEN RADICALS have been ordered deported to their native lands, where they face certain punishment and perhaps death, not wholly because they hold political views incompatible with the philosophy of a capitalist society, but because the Department of Labor insists on putting a strict interpretation of the law above principles and human rights. With Guido Serio, whose case has already been discussed in these columns, Tao Hsuan Li, Chinese student, and Sadaichi Kenmatsu, Japanese laborer, make up the trio of unfortunate aliens. Li was attending New York University when he was arrested by two Department of Labor agents and taken to Ellis Island to await deportation as a Communist. Kenmatsu was employed as a berry-picker in California when a like fate befell him. All three men have asked that they be allowed to depart peacefully and at their own expense for Russia, instead of being sent to their home countries, Italy, China, and Japan, where Communists are today being openly persecuted. But the United States government refuses to take such a humane stand. The courts have been asked to overrule the Labor Department (the Serio case has been pending for several months; the others were lately taken to court); but so far decisions in the lower courts have upheld the Department of Labor.

DESPITE THE DECISION of the United States Supreme Court in the Yetta Stromberg case, it is still illegal to display a red flag in California for propaganda or similar purposes. In setting aside the conviction in this case the court merely held that the conviction was invalid because it had been obtained under a State law, one of the essential clauses of which is unconstitutional. This clause, making it a felony to display the traditional revolutionary banner as a symbol of opposition to organized government, was considered by the court to be "repugnant to the guaranty of liberty contained in the Fourteenth Amendment." By inference, however, the court ruled that the other two major clauses of the statute are still valid, so that convictions can still be had under the notorious "red-flag" law if in bringing charges against accused radicals the authorities disregard the first clause. The still valid clauses make it a felonious offense to display a red flag as a means of inviting or stimulating anarchistic action, or for the purpose of promoting propaganda of seditious character.

THE LATEST ENCYCLICAL to be issued from the Vatican, known as "Quadragesimo Anno," has caused furious comment from the Socialists. The Pope has reiterated the Catholic position that one may not be a good Catholic and a good Socialist at the same time. This in spite of the fact that the church has many points in common with Socialist doctrine. This strongly asseverated incompatibility is certain to raise some interesting questions in political parties throughout the world. To be specific, if Alfred E. Smith had been elected president of the United States, could he have named a member of the Socialist Party to one of the federal commissions requiring the services of an expert of whatever political faith? Can a professing Catholic, who would not feel finally bound by the mere suggestion of his priest that one might be expected to vote for Mayor Walker, continue to maintain his preference at the polls for Norman Thomas or Heywood Broun? Communism the Pope calls the "enemy of the church and of God himself." When one recalls the early Christians who were said to have held all their modest goods in common one is reminded anew that the Catholic church is a law unto itself. It rules that men should earn enough to support their families because women ought to confine their major energies to the home; it declares that "unemployment is a dreadful scourge"; it urges that employer and employed "join in their plans and efforts to overcome all difficulties." These are counsels of perfection, but the difference with the Socialists is a matter of hard fact and definite counsel. Will it be obeyed?

DOROTHY DIX, not so well known as Mrs. Elizabeth Meriwether Gilmer, who writes advice to the lovelorn and unhappily wed, has just been awarded an honorary degree of Doctor of Letters by Oglethorpe University. This reminds us that the last word on honorary degrees was said a short while ago by that astute commentator on public affairs and national nonsense, Mr. Will Rogers, the lariat-thrower. Mr. Rogers, it appears, was offered the degree of L.H.D., Doctor of Humanities, by Oklahoma City University. Explaining that the highest degree he would accept would be A.D.—Doctor of Applesauce—from the Oolagah (Oklahoma) Kindergarten, Mr. Rogers, in a wire to the *Daily Oklahoman,* declined in this wise:

> What are you trying to do? Make a joke out of college degrees? They are in bad enough repute as it is, without handing 'em around to comedians. The whole honorary-degree thing is the "hooey." I saw some college giving Mellon one, and he is a billion bucks short. I got too much respect for people that work and earn 'em to see 'em handed around to every notorious character.

This about covers the subject from every possible angle. But the season is soon to be upon us again, and we shall see a new crop of Congressmen, best-seller writers, famous movie stars, and newspaper columnists stepping up to get their sheepskins and the right to wear a fancy colored hood to the academic gown that, in many cases, they never earned. We accordingly propose another degree for Mr. Rogers: C.S.D. —Doctor of Common Sense—and the universities ought to fall over one another in their rush to bestow it.

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Down with the Tariffs!

AT last great and inspiring news of progress toward sanity and sanitation has come out of Europe! The session of the European Union Commission, brought into being by Aristide Briand just one year ago amid much scoffing and positive assurances that nothing worth while could come out of it, was adjourned on May 21 with an ovation for M. Briand and, what is more important, with a remarkable record of achievement which the British Foreign Minister, Mr. Henderson, declared proved "the immense value of M. Briand's idea," and rendered enthusiastic this representative of a government which was entirely cool when the union was formed a year ago. Still more, as a result of the sympathetic hearing and treatment given to the Russian representative, M. Litvinov, the New York *Times* correspondent was able to quote a conservative League of Nations official as declaring that now "for all practical purposes Russia has become a full member of the League's economic organization."

This in itself would have been a most satisfactory result. But let us look at what the meeting actually did. It adopted "a vast program of intensive economic action." This includes a serious and friendly study of the Russian proposals to end economic aggression and enmity between Russia and the capitalist nations, with the goal of putting an end to the dumping excitement. Next came the creation of a subcommittee on economic coordination to meet in Geneva on July 6; the calling of a general meeting on June 10 to act on the disposal of the pending European wheat surpluses; the approval of the continuance of the tariff-reduction negotiations between Great Britain and other countries; the appointment of a special subcommittee to deal with the plight of Austria and to alleviate its distress; the appointment of a special committee to aid the League of Nations Financial Committee to obtain effective financial cooperation among the European nations; the indorsement of an agricultural preferential-tariff plan to insure better prices for Central and Eastern European grain, and also—even this does not exhaust the list of constructive steps—the creation of a committee of six to study with six members of the governing body of the International Labor Office the problems of unemployment and international distribution of labor.

Equally striking was the action of the Council of the League of Nations on May 19 in electing Mr. Henderson president of the World Disarmament Conference which meets in February next. Of all the delegates who will attend that conference we venture to assert that no one will come to Geneva more determined to produce a real result than Mr. Henderson. In his speech at Queen's Hall in London in February last, Mr. Henderson made the most explicit promises that the British government would leave no stone unturned to achieve success for its disarmament desires at the conference, and rightly stressed the success of that conference as being the most vital need of the world today in the field of international relations.

Finally, Mr. Henderson made the week ending May 23 a most notable one by his magnificent denunciation of the tariffs which are strangling Europe and doing more to continue the existing world depression than any of the other six causes which are the major reasons for the world's economic suffering at this time. The press reports that his speech "was the most eloquent ever delivered at Geneva, and the most forceful appeal for action on behalf of suffering humanity ever heard in a League meeting." At last it would appear as if statesmen's feet were beginning to be set in the right direction! Mr. Henderson rightly referred in his speech to the existing tariff conditions as "a state of economic war" and branded the policy of nations which try by every means to keep out foreign goods as a "policy of madness." "I repeat," he said, "that among the different causes contributing to the world depression the magnitude and the high level of protective tariffs rank first and foremost." He then went on to denounce the principal creditor countries of the world, which refuse to accept goods which the debtor countries have to offer, shut their eyes to the fact that international trade must take the form of barter, and at the same time have "insisted on payment not in goods, but in gold," and thereby "largely contributed to the recent catastrophic fall in prices." Finally, he said, "this sequence of tariffs, payment of debts, and the scramble for gold is sapping the very foundations of our economic system."

These are noble words, noble truths, bravely spoken. They come as a breath of sweet, fresh air in the fetid atmosphere of hatred, ill-will, and deadly economic nationalism which has been poisoning all Europe, and everywhere endangering the very existence of the nations of the earth. But there is nothing in these words to make an American proud. Mr. Henderson went out of his way to say that the world owed "an undying debt of gratitude to the great leaders of the French and German peoples" for such progress as has been made toward the beginning of the reestablishment of mutual understanding, peace, and good-will in the world. The United States he could not mention, for it is the United States which is the worst offender in both the matter of tariffs and the economic insanity of refusing to accept goods from its debtor countries when it is the foremost of the creditor countries. Let the United States take this as a most solemn warning. If it continues in its folly it will not only be recognized the world over, as indeed it already is in considerable measure, as the worst enemy of reconstruction and the reestablishment of prosperity and international good-will. It will find that this new European Union will be more and more forced into an anti-American attitude, not of its will and desire, but because it will be in duty bound to rescue Europe before it is too late from a situation to which the United States holds the key, and the golden key at that. Down with the tariffs! Mr. Henderson has, if anything, understated the mischief they are doing to the world. Down with the American tariffs! They are at the root of our own evils; they are chaining the American people to the chariot wheels of the protected and privileged interests. They must be leveled, in order to save Europe, in order to save the United States and to restore to it not only the opportunity for economic well-being and progress at home but the good-will of the world.

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The Crisis in Wheat

THE failure of the London wheat conference was complete. The delegates from the eleven principal wheat-exporting nations of the world, recognizing this, made an effort even feebler than is usual in such cases to disguise the failure by talking vaguely about another conference and by arranging to set up a permanent organization to collect world wheat statistics already rather adequately collected by other organizations. The conference was doomed from the start. Before it opened the American delegates declared flatly that the United States would under no circumstances participate in an international wheat pool. The Russian representatives accepted the principle of an international export pool as proposed by Poland, but demanded a quota basis which no other large wheat-exporting country would accept. "The U. S. S. R.," said the official Soviet statement, "has naturally a right to occupy in the world's grain markets the same place as was occupied by pre-war Russia."

It is not difficult to see what this would have meant. When Russia's internal disorganization made it impossible for her to supply wheat for the export market, the other wheat-raising countries of the world, principally Canada, the Argentine, Australia, and the United States, greatly increased their crops to make up the deficiency. Outside of Russia the average wheat production of the world from 1909 to 1913 was 1,807,000,000 bushels; in the years from 1926 to 1930 it was 2,433,000,000 bushels, an increase of 626,000,000. Russia's average crop in the years just preceding the war was 757,000,000 bushels, or nearly 30 per cent of the total world crop. The Russian crop fell in 1921 as low as 205,000,000 bushels; since then there has been a rapid rise, and the crop in 1930 was 1,032,000,000 bushels, even larger than that which would be called for by the pre-war proportions. Further, the Russians expect a very much larger crop this year than last—36,500,000 tons, to be precise, compared with 29,500,000 tons in 1930.

With wheat already selling at the lowest price in thirty-six years, such figures are not very palatable to the other wheat-raising countries. Yet one hesitates to say that the Russian demand was unreasonable. The Russians point out that they have one of the lowest costs of wheat production in the world. Why then should they restrict their crops, cut off a source of profit and one of the chief of their few means of paying for imports, in order to keep foreign high-cost wheat producers in business?

It is worth inquiring what the probable result would have been if one of the London plans for stabilizing the wheat markets of the world had been put into effect. What would have happened, for example, if the principal wheat-exporting countries had agreed to restrict their exports within definite allotted quotas? If such an export restriction had been unaccompanied by any plan to reduce wheat acreage within the individual countries, it could easily have made the plight of the wheat-growers worse even than it is. For if each country were permitted to offer only a certain percentage of its wheat in the world markets, what would become of the wheat that would otherwise be shipped out for export? Obviously it would merely be stored in the country of its origin and depress the domestic price there below the world price. Any gain that wheat-growers received, therefore, for their export wheat might have been more than offset by their losses on wheat sold in the home market, and the further complication would have been introduced of deciding whose wheat should be exported and whose sold at home, unless there were an extremely complex system of export allotment for individual growers. Such a system would be practically impossible to administer.

On the other hand, what would have been the result if each country had agreed to reduce its wheat acreage by the same percentage? This is a plan that could only have been worked out by a virtual dictatorship within each country; and with privately owned farms it would again have involved enormously complicated administrative difficulties. Further, such a plan, even if successful in its first object, would in all likelihood merely have postponed an inevitable readjustment and stored up trouble for the future. For it would have been an obvious encouragement to wasteful production. If it costs American wheat farmers from sixty cents to more than a dollar a bushel to raise wheat, why should the Russian co-operatives, with costs, say, of thirty-five to fifty cents a bushel, be expected to restrict their production by the same amount as the American dollar producer to keep the latter in wheat-raising? Why, for that matter, should the American producer with sixty-cent costs reduce his acreage for the benefit of the producer with dollar costs? Soon or late the high-cost producer of wheat, wherever he exists in the world, must abandon production and turn, if he can, to some other crop. No wheat plan that did not recognize that fact could in the long run be anything but futile, and it might be calamitous.

Our Railroads' Plight

AN Interstate Commerce Commissioner out for complete government control of our railways? It seems incredible, but it is true. In an address at New York on May 20, Joseph B. Eastman, for twelve years a member of the commission, declared it to be his "abiding conviction" that the government "should assume complete responsibility for such business as is now under an elaborate system of public regulation, under which it divides responsibility and control at present with private enterprise." The idea of "government in business," he said, did not alarm him "if the business is of such a nature that it cannot be carried on by private enterprise without the protection to all concerned which is afforded by an elaborate system of public regulation." His proposal was that the transportation services of the country should be carried on by "a corporation or public trust controlled by the government and designed to be self-supporting," with directors or trustees "selected in part by non-political agencies." If, he told his hearers, "the same amount of ingenuity were devoted to the subject as has been devoted, for example, to the creation of intricate and largely vicious mazes of holding companies and interlaced subsidiaries, it would be quite possible to evolve a plan of complete governmental responsibility for the transportation services which would retain most of the merits of private initiative."

Revolutionary this utterance of Mr. Eastman's certainly

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was, since it came from a high government official. But the heads of the railroads? On the very next day after Mr. Eastman's speech, the Eastern Railroad Presidents' Conference had no other suggestion to make in the sore straits in which the roads find themselves than to demand an increase in freight rates to produce $400,000,000 of additional revenue. That is a counsel of folly, if not despair. The country in its present distressed state will not easily hand over such a vast sum in increased freight rates to enable the railways to do business at a profit. Moreover, if the Interstate Commerce Commission did authorize the higher rates, there is no guaranty whatsoever that the mere increase would not drastically check the volume of freight business and drive more of it to motor trucks. Not that we are without sympathy for the railroad executives. Theirs is an extremely difficult position, and it is getting worse instead of better.

Neither operating nor fixed charges can be materially reduced. The interest on the funded debt, approximately $4,000,000,000 of which is held by life-insurance companies, savings banks, or trusts as investments, must of course be paid if bond values are not to collapse; taxes tend to go up rather than down; outlay for supplies has been "cut to the bone"; an average wage of 66 cents an hour for labor is "considerably below the average for other industries"; and the number of employees has been cut from a normal of 1,800,000 to 1,200,000. Theoretically, the government allows the railways to earn 5¾ per cent on their valuation before recapture begins to be talked of; actually, earnings averaged only 3½ per cent last year. Only a few of the strongest or best located lines are able to earn their dividends; many are barely able to make both ends meet; a formidable number seem headed for bankruptcy. The fault is not wholly due to the business depression. The Interstate Commerce Commission has dallied with consolidation plans which it is its duty to work out, and its method of valuing the railway properties has encountered dissent in the courts. Congress, never very friendly, has done its best to force reduced rates on agricultural products. Add to these governmental impediments the new competition of buses, air transport, and inland and coastwise water traffic, and we have a chaotic condition which is pressing the railways to the wall.

Mr. Eastman's plan, on the other hand, looks like a device for securing some of the advantages of government ownership without assuming all of the responsibility. It is becoming increasingly clear that the transportation problem has changed fundamentally since 1887, when the Interstate Commerce Commission was created, and that railways, buses, and air and water lines need now to be brought under a unified administration. Mr. Eastman would like to see this done, although without transferring the ownership of the properties to the government, and it is quite possible that the method of control which he suggests might be made to work. But why make two bites of a cherry? If private administration of transportation plus government control without responsibility has broken down, why not take over the transportation services and be done with it? We should at least know then whom to blame if the railways were not self-supporting.

We venture to prophesy that if the present crisis continues two years, many railway executives will be found to be advocates of both government ownership and operation.

Book Troubles

THE American Booksellers' Association, in convention assembled during the week of May 11, indicated that the book business was in a very bad way. The booksellers are inclined to lay most of their troubles to the nefarious practices of the hard-hearted publishers. Dollar books, direct selling to libraries, private mailing lists, book clubs, and mail-order campaigns are some of the evils persisted in, according to President Jacobs of the Booksellers' Association, by the unfeeling publishing gentry.

To remedy these difficulties the booksellers had one or two bright ideas. One was that booksellers vary their advertising and not confine it to the literary pages of the newspapers. This was a suggestion made by Major Carson of N. W. Ayer and Son, who said: "Your advertising should appeal to the girl who works in the five-and-ten-cent store as well as to the intellectual. If you will disguise your copy more, a larger body of readers will notice it. Now they pass it by, recognizing it as typical book advertisements." In this we see the germ of a great advertising thought. All that need be done is to ascertain what commodities appeal most to the buying public, be it automobiles, underwear, golf clubs, or sweets. Then, "You have always wanted a Rolls Royce," the caption in bold-face type might declare; "but you can probably better afford our newest novel at $1.75." Or, "Greta Garbo wears a pale-blue satin negligee. You would look charming in one while you read our latest book of poems. Only $1.50."

One other point was raised by the booksellers that should have considerable influence on the future of advertising. Blurbs on book jackets were denounced as often misleading and untruthful; it was recommended that the publishers be made to guarantee the truth of their blurbs. Guy Holt, of the McGraw-Hill Company, was thereupon quoted as replying that such a guaranty was not feasible, and that "purchasers of books must face the same risk they take paying admission to a theater." This extraordinary statement is, of course, possible of extended application. A book that is labeled the "greatest novel of all time," or "a definitive and unsurpassable biography of one of the world's greatest figures by another," need be, without stretching Mr. Holt's point too far, no such thing. The public must take its chances. If it buys a package labeled "raspberries" it may not complain if it contains cyanide of potassium; and if, as so often happens in book buying, it is in search of cyanide, strong stuff to beguile away the world's ineptitude, it cannot object to finding raspberries saccharinely resting therein.

All this proves beyond a doubt that something is wrong in the book trade. In addition it indicates that, judging by their quoted remarks, the booksellers are not going to do much about it in the near future. To persuade the public to buy a book requires the most astute wiles of the salesman, a mixture of honesty, guile, and prophetic insight. For some reason buying books is a much more momentous affair than buying a ticket to the movies. Books last. They encumber the parlor table. It is almost impossible to destroy them. It is important, therefore, that their contents justify the space they occupy. Good books do this better than bad. But the booksellers did not get around to this point.

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Red Menace and Yellow Journalism

By OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

IT is always the open season for attacks upon Russia. It would be hard, however, to find a more striking attempt to stir up ill-will against Russia and to coin money out of that effort than is now being indulged in by the New York *Evening Post,* once the high-minded, ethically conducted, and respected newspaper of Horace White and Edwin L. Godkin. What makes this particular instance so flagrant is the deliberate sensationalizing, which frequently nearly crosses the line of misrepresentation, in the headlines written by the editors over the articles by H. R. Knickerbocker on Russia and Russian trade.

Mr. Knickerbocker is the Berlin correspondent of the *Evening Post.* Last fall he went to Russia and after traveling there for six weeks did a series of articles—not, the Russians think, without some bias, but none the less a straightforward and honest piece of reporting—for which he was awarded the Pulitzer prize for 1930. But even this series was exploited by the headline writers in the office of his newspaper in a way that must have made Mr. Knickerbocker redden with shame. The very title put upon the book into which these articles were made, "The Red Trade Menace," showed a bias which Mr. Knickerbocker certainly did not have when he went to Russia or when I talked with him on his return to Berlin. He is not the kind of journalist who takes orders to color his stuff. Where his articles were anti-Soviet, they were so written because he felt that way. If he erred at points, it was owing to faultiness of vision and background, and not because he deviated from the standards of ethical reporting because somebody else told him to do so. What he was bent on was portraying Russia in the fall of 1930. He was not there to play up the Russian trade menace.

And how were those articles treated by the *Post*? The first article carried the caption "Soviet, on Iron Rations, Wars for Trade Primacy, *Post* Survey Reveals." The next day the headline reader learned: "Famished Moscow Short All Food Except Bread." Once more: "Reds Use Forced Labor in Forest, *Post* Finds." The reader, however, found that while the kulaks, in uncertain numbers, were compelled to work in the lumber camps, the writer could discover practically no convict labor, and so far from finding that all Soviet labor was forced labor, he discovered a labor turnover in all industries so extreme as to cause severe financial losses. Some days later the reader even learned that of the forced laborers "178,000 Men Quit Torturous Soviet Coal Pits in Year," which looked pretty bad till he read below that conditions in the mines were so difficult that the men preferred to go and work elsewhere, so that the Soviets had to depend on the enthusiasm of their shock brigades of young Communists to get out the coal they wanted. Rarely has an honest reporter, trying hard to present a true picture of what he saw, been worse served by headline writers. If Mr. Knickerbocker was not outraged, he was entitled to be.

The success of this series, which is said in newspaper circles to have added 20,000 readers to the *Evening Post* during their continuance, emboldened the paper to try it again. This time Mr. Knickerbocker traveled about Europe. When his copy began to appear, the headline writers repeated with this result: "Red Trade Raids Europe, Survey by *Post* Reveals. H. R. Knickerbocker Finds Soviet Goods Flooding Twelve Nations. U. S. Markets Are Heavily Affected. Continent Feels Menace, Wonders if Economic Cordon Can Be Set Up." The reliability of this introduction may be gleaned from the fact that Soviet exports constitute *2 per cent* of world trade, and as this 2 per cent is distributed over the entire world, it is obvious that it must take very little to flood a nation. But let us return to the headlines. Here are some more: "Italy Backs Soviet Trade and Bars European Bloc. Two Dictatorships Stand United Against Economic Cordon." "Soviet Oil Floods Italy, Supplies Fascist Fleet. Great Plant at Savona Undersells America 20 Per Cent. France Sees Peril if War Develops. Italian State Corporation Distributes Products. Monopoly for Reds Looms." "Soviet Cuts Grain Price to Outstrip U. S. in Italy. Regularly Shades Grain Rate to Keep Below Competitors. Passes U. S. This Year in Anthracite Sales." Precisely as in the earlier series, the headlines are deliberately calculated to excite alarm in the mind of the reader, and to cause hostility. We are accustomed to gross misunderstanding and misrepresentation of our capitalist society in Communist writing and especially in the Moscow dailies, but it may be doubted whether we shall find there any statements better calculated to arouse fear and hatred than the treatment of Mr. Knickerbocker's facts by his editors.

Now as to some of the facts. In Italy, for example, the reader will discover that 16 per cent of the wheat imported is drawn from Russia, whereas, as Mr. Knickerbocker himself points out, before the war as high as 60 per cent sometimes came from the Czar's dominions—plainly a dreadful case of "flooding." As for the ruinous flooding of Italy with Russian coal, Mr. Knickerbocker reports that in 1930 Soviet anthracite constituted about 2½ per cent of Italy's imports of 12,000,000 tons, and that the Italians expressed themselves ready to take all the anthracite they could get from these wicked Russians. Why? Because it was cheap and of good quality. There you have the abominable conduct of the Soviets clearly revealed. As a matter of fact, Russia exports in large amounts, just as capitalist countries do, precisely those goods for which she has natural advantages or other special facilities—lumber, oil, furs, wheat, textile piece goods, and flax, to mention them in order of importance during 1930. She imports industrial equipment, tractors, cotton, iron and steel manufactures, and other products for which other countries at this time have relative advantages.

As for unfair competition, Mr. Knickerbocker finds that "Soviet prices are, as a rule, just low enough—but always low enough—to get the business, and not, if the Soviets can help it, any lower." Heaven help us, but we had thought that that was exactly the way that everybody got foreign business! These Soviet trade practices are precisely those of any big American industrial concern under similar cir-

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cumstances. Indeed, under the compulsion of the reparations and debts payments, the Germans are doing precisely that same thing. For example, the Belgians and Poles and other neighbors of Germany were able last year to buy a ton of German rye for seventy marks less than any German consumer himself paid within the boundaries of the German Reich. It would be just as fair to attribute deliberate political motives to the German exporters as it is to attribute them to the Russian. But the whole slant given to Mr. Knickerbocker's articles is that this is all part of a deliberate effort to break down the capitalist governments of Europe. That the leaders of the Soviets would be glad to see the capitalist governments fall everybody knows, because they have said so from the outset of their experiment. But what every honest student of Russian conditions also knows is that they are compelled to send out everything that they can possibly deprive the Russian people of in order to get foreign currency, or credits, with which to buy machinery from England, Germany, and the United States, and all the rest of the materials that they need to industrialize Russia.

If they were such devilish schemers as the *Evening Post* headlines are calculated to portray them, would they, as Mr. Knickerbocker says, reduce their prices only just low enough to capture other markets, or would they not be selling at half- or quarter-price? Mr. Knickerbocker adduces no facts to suggest, and does not himself suggest, anything other than the ordinary commercial motives behind Russian-Italian trade, or anything but the usual commercial practices on the part of Russia in trying to sell its goods in Italy. If the story concerned any other country on earth except Russia, indeed, it would be looked on merely as a striking example of hustling for trade, of trade recovery and development, but not as a "menace" to anyone except rival producers in other countries now forced to face a vigorous new competition. Naturally, the appearance of any new competitor gives serious concern to business men, but it should never be occasion for terror, or for wild charges of dumping and unfair competition. Moreover, the simple fact remains that even when nations like Germany, Russia, France, and Great Britain dump goods in another country, they are paid for what they deliver by the goods of the country to which they deliver. A cash transaction practically never takes place. It is, of course, hard luck for the *Evening Post* that its yellow headlines came in a week which saw the warm and friendly reception of the Soviet statesmen at Geneva and London on terms of full equality.

Why then all the sensational headlines and advertising? First and foremost this atmosphere is created to sell papers. Let us breed hatred and fear and thoroughly confuse readers, if only thereby the circulation figures can be swelled in a year when every newsstand notices the shrinkage of its sales. Secondly, it may be an attempt deliberately to create hostility toward Russia for ulterior political purposes. No greater disservice could be done to the United States than to create a feeling of unreasoning terror about what the Russians are doing and going to do, if only because we need their trade badly in this crisis. There is, finally, still such a thing as responsibility of the press. We are entitled to expect of it not only enterprise in the learning of facts about the experiment carried on by the Soviet Government, but a decent sincerity and sobriety, not to say honesty, in the presentation and weighing of those facts.

What I Believe*

By BEATRICE WEBB

OUT of the social environment and mental climate in which I was born and bred there seemed to arise two outstanding questions, questions perpetually recurring in my own consciousness from girlhood to old age. Can there be a science of social organization, in the sense in which we have a science of mechanics or a science of chemistry, enabling us to forecast what will happen, and perhaps to alter the event by taking appropriate action or persuading others to take it? Secondly, assuming that there can be, or will be, such a science of society, is man's capacity for scientific discovery the only faculty required for the reorganization of society according to an ideal? Or do we need religion as well as science, emotional faith as well as intellectual curiosity? In the following pages will be found my tentative answer to these two questions—that is, my philosophy of work or life.

The first of these questions, Can there be an applied science of society? led me early in life to choose a particular vocation—the study of social institutions by the methods of personal observation, actual participation in the organization concerned, the taking of evidence, statistical inquiry, and the examination of historical records. My reaction from this long-continued practice of the art of the social investigator has been an ever-deepening conviction of the supreme value in all social activity of the scientific method.

Let me give one or two examples of an applied science of society taken from the public administration of Great Britain during the past hundred years. In the early part of the nineteenth century the business of government, whether national or local government, was honeycombed with favoritism, corruption, and barefaced peculation. This wholesale dishonesty on the part of representatives and officials has been largely swept away by the adoption of a social invention of definitely scientific character, namely, the audit—a device which is scarcely a century old.

Another instance is the discovery, during the past three-quarters of a century, of what has been aptly called the device of the common rule. You see this exemplified in the advantage we all gain through the existence of fixed rules of the road. Because of the rule, whatever its terms, we all get greater safety and even greater speed of locomotion. Imagine the blocking of the traffic in the great cities—not to mention the accidents—if there were no rule of the road at all, if motor buses and lorries, taxis, cyclists, and pedestrians were left to scramble through as best they could.

It is this device of the common rule—a genuine social

* The second of a series of articles on this subject by well-known men and women. The third will appear in an early issue.—Editor The Nation.

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discovery—which has given us the factory acts and the public-health legislation about the pollution of rivers, the purity of food, and the prevention of the worst forms of overcrowding. One of the most recent of these common rules—summer or daylight-saving time—has astonished the world by the sudden and complete way in which it has borne out the prediction of its inventor, William Willett. By the simple expedient of insisting that all public clocks should, on a particular night, skip one hour, and that all transport undertakings and public bodies should accept this fiction, the whole population has been led to rise from bed one hour earlier every day during the hot months of the year. By this means each person enjoys some 200 additional hours of life-giving sunlight, while the community as a whole saves millions of pounds annually in the cost of artificial lighting.

Let me give one more instance of the advantage of the scientific study of facts in the way that I have described. A hundred years ago the accepted way of dealing with extreme poverty—what was called destitution—was poor-law relief. This relief took one of two forms—maintenance in the general mixed workhouse or a niggardly dole of unconditional outdoor relief. A century of experience has discredited both. As a result of extensive observation and experiment by all sorts of persons, officials and philanthropists, recorded in innumerable bluebooks and scientific treatises, there has been gradually created a whole series of new social institutions vitally affecting human behavior—a veritable framework of prevention. Instead of threatening the sick person with the workhouse if he applies for relief, the public-health authority has come more and more to seek him out, in order to cure him and to prevent any spread of disease. The local education authority now welcomes every child to school, insists that the parents send the child to school reasonably clean, even feeds the child if it is found to require it, and prosecutes the parents who are guilty of wilful neglect. The infant-welfare center endeavors to look after every birth, instructs the mother how to rear the baby, and offers periodically to examine and weigh the growing infant so that the mother may know how it is progressing. This may seem a small matter. But the statistician proves to us that during the past thirty years, since these things have been done, only half as many babies die as in the previous generation. What is even more striking is the vast alteration for the better that has been effected by these preventive services in the behavior of the parents and the children in the way of healthy living, of cleanliness, and even of manners.

There are some of us who believe that it will yet be found practicable, through observation and experiment, to invent an analogous framework of prevention applicable to that terrible disease of modern industry, mass unemployment. And looking forward to a more distant future there is the science of the better breeding of the human race—eugenics is the name given to this department of social biology by its founder, Francis Galton—knowledge which, when we are wise enough and virtuous enough to apply it, may immeasurably improve the body and mind of man.

Have I succeeded by these few illustrations in making the reader realize why I believe that we have already a science of society—a young and very incomplete science, but one that is steadily growing and that is capable of indefinite extension? But it is a science with limitations. Unlike iron and stone and machinery, human beings and social institutions are always changing, and such social changes are sometimes so catastrophic and far-reaching as completely to baffle our generalizations and nullify our predictions. No student of social facts, however competent, could have forecast the Russian Revolution or the nature of the Soviet Government. No one could have foreseen the sudden development of the Fascist state in Italy. No one could have predicted the rapid rise to prosperity and power of the Czecho-Slovak republic, the very name of which we can barely pronounce and the exact position of which is unknown to most of us. Here and there, from time to time, there emerges from the mass a man or a group of men whose uncommon qualities are exceptionally influential with the particular race of human beings with whom they come in contact. It may be a captivating personality, it may be religious exaltation, it may be superlative efficiency in the organization of war or in the administration of the state. William James called such great men "ferments," influences which change the course of life of a whole nation. We may recognize such a ferment in the great leader of the Czecho-Slovak race, Masaryk. Sometimes these potent individuals appear more like volcanic eruptions—as with Lenin in Russia and Mussolini in Italy and Gandhi in India. These are as unpredictable by science as is an earthquake. But woe betide the great man, be he prophet or warrior or statesman, who forgets not only that the common man exists, but also that it is with the common man that he has to deal. If a Lenin, a Mussolini, or a Gandhi wants to reduce the infant death-rate or to adopt summer time, to create a universal system of public education or to build up a stable democratic state out of millions of men of different races and antagonistic creeds, in Russia, Italy, or India, he must, for all his volcanic power, learn from the knowledge of past and present social institutions the particular devices by which one or other of these things can be created. Before he died Lenin had to admit that in ignoring one common characteristic of the tens of millions of Russian peasant-cultivators—the desire to better their own circumstances—he had made a big mistake. He was indeed, to reverse his policy of complete communism, and to permit, at least temporarily, a measure of individual accumulation and private trade. Mussolini may yet find that in suppressing all independence of speech and freedom of the press he has alienated an indispensable factor in a stable and progressive state.

To sum up: The generalizations and predictions of the science of society relate to that strange abstraction, the average human being. Here we recognize what might be termed the mystical element in the work of the statistician. What he tells us is the truth, even truth of a high order. But he does not deal with our individual peculiarities. He predicts what will be found true of what is common to all the individuals who make up the group or race of men with which he is dealing. The uncommon, the exceptional, the peculiar characteristics of the individual man, and the manner of his influence, are at present, and possibly always will be, outside the scope of a science of society.

I pass to the second question which has continuously confronted me in my passage through life. Is man's capacity for scientific discovery the only faculty required for the reorganization of society according to an ideal?

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Or do we need religion as well as science, emotional faith as well as intellectual curiosity?

Very early in my career as a social investigator I realized that science deals only with the processes of life; it has little to say of the purpose of life. We can learn through science how best to kill a man or slaughter a multitude of men; we can discover how to cure a human being of specific diseases and thus raise indefinitely the standard of health. But no amount of personal observation or statistical inquiry will tell us whether we *ought* to kill or to cure. Our behavior, as parent or child, as colleague or rival, as employer or employed, as private citizen or public official, is largely dictated to us by law or public opinion. But whenever we settle it for ourselves, it seems to depend on intuition or impulse, on likes or dislikes, or, to put it in another way, on our emotional outlook on life. Historically, codes of conduct, scales of value, patterns of behavior—to use the term of my friend, Graham Wallas—are intimately related to contemporary conceptions of man's relation to the universe, whether these notions are woven into magic rites, wrought into religious creeds, or expressed in systems of philosophy incapable of objective verification. My own experience is that in the nobler type of men these guides to conduct appear to rise out of emotive thought, connecting the purpose of individual man with the purpose of the universe, the visible with the invisible world. "Man lives in two worlds," Professor Haldane tells us in his brilliant exposition of What I Believe, "the visible world which changes with time, and an invisible world whose constituents do not change." "I have not very much use for people who are not in touch with the invisible world," he adds somewhat scornfully. The trouble is that when we ask to be put in touch with this invisible world we are given, by this eminent scientist, not the bread of spiritual guidance but the hard stone of pure intellect, and a short measure of that! "Among the components of the invisible world are the realities corresponding to mathematical statements like $16 + 9 = 25$." This, literally, is all that he vouchsafes us! Memory recalls my friend Bertrand Russell arguing that the arithmetical proposition that two and two make four cannot be proved by pure logic, and is merely an empirical truth derived from experience, thus belonging to the visible and not to the invisible world. However that may be, to an undeveloped mind like mine Professor Haldane's exposition of the invisible world is meaningless. It arouses no response from my intellect or my emotions.

But why should we expect to describe the invisible world? All we can do is to explain our own state of mind, so that we may enter into communion with those of like temperament, and thus encourage and strengthen each other in our common pilgrimage through life. For my own part, I believe that the mind of man, as distinguished from the appetites and instincts which he shares with other animals, is divided into two parts—the intellectual and the emotional, each having its own methods and sanctions. What is called the scientific method is the highest expression of the intellect; by observation, verification, and reasoning we can discover how things happen and predict how they will happen under like circumstances, and, in many instances, by applying this knowledge we can alter this happening in the direction we desire.

The highest expression of the emotional side of human nature is the attainment of the beautiful and the good; the one represented by art in all its manifestations, the other by varieties of religious experience, leading to what is felt to be the right conduct of life. I have not the artistic temperament and I know not in what state of consciousness this may be embodied; what may be its discipline and its sanctions. But like the majority of the human race I have an incipient religious temperament—a yearning for the mental security of a spiritual home. Professor Whitehead says:

> Religion is the vision of something which stands beyond, behind, and within the passing flux of immediate things; something which is real, and yet waiting to be realized; something which is a remote possibility, and yet the greatest of present facts; something that gives meaning to all that passes, and yet eludes apprehension; something whose possession is the final good, and yet is beyond all reach; something which is the ultimate ideal, and the hopeless quest.

This vision of something which is real and yet waiting to be realized is associated in my experience with an intuitive use of prayer. A secularist friend once cross-examined me as to what exactly I meant by prayer; he challenged me to define the process of prayer, to describe its happening. I answered I would gladly do so if I could find the words. The trouble is, as Tagore observes about poetry, that words have meanings, or, as I prefer to say, predominantly intellectual meanings; and in prayer it is emotion, not reason, that seeks an outlet. It is by prayer, by communion with an all-pervading spiritual force, that the soul of man discovers the purpose or goal of human endeavor. That is why down all the ages of human development prayer has been intimately associated, whether as cause or effect, with the nobler and more enduring forms of architecture and music; associated, too, with poetry and painting, with the awe-inspiring aspects of nature, with the great emotional mysteries of maternity, mating, and death.

To Professor Haldane my longer string of words may seem as meaningless as his curt arithmetical formula does to me. Perhaps we can find common ground in "The Will to Believe," eloquently expounded by William James, or in "The Philosophy of 'As If,'" logically developed by Vaihinger. So far as I understand the conclusion of these eminent metaphysicians—a conclusion which I understand is also held by Einstein—it can be summed up in the proposition that wherever no hypothesis can be scientifically proved or disproved, and yet some hypothesis must be accepted as a starting-point for thought or as a basis for conduct, the individual is justified in selecting the hypothesis which yields the richest results in the discovery of truth or in the leading of a good life. Such a justifiable hypothesis seems to me the faith I hold: that man is related to the universe by an emotional as well as by a rational tie, that there is a spirit of love at work in the universe, and that the emotion of prayer or aspiration reveals to man the ends he should pursue if he desires to harmonize his own purpose with that of the universe; exactly as the working of his intellect discovers the means by which these ends may be best achieved. "Did I ever tell you," writes one of the greatest of British scientific thinkers, Francis Galton, "that I have always made it a habit to *pray* before writing anything for publication, that there may be no self-seeking in it, and perfect candor, together with respect for the feelings of others?"

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But I realize that in the world of today science is in the ascendant, while the religious impulse is in eclipse. This decay of religious faith is, I think, a reaction from what is false in the current religious creeds. Throughout the ages, prophets and priests, saints and Sadducees, have dictated to the faithful mythical accounts of how things happen, how they have happened, and how they will happen—whether concerning the beginnings of life on this earth, or the course of the stars, or the diagnosis and cure of disease, or the better organization of society. This unwarranted intrusion of religion into the realm of science, this illegitimate attempt to supersede reason by emotion in respect to the processes of nature, has always led and will always lead, at best, to failure to attain the desired ends; at worst, to superstitious practices and degrading magic. Few believers in the scientific method accept as evidence of fact the Biblical narrative of the creation of the world in six days or that of the miracles of the Immaculate Conception and the resurrection from the dead of the physical body of Jesus of Nazareth. I am aware that these "dogmas" are deemed by some practicing Christians to be not statements of fact at all, but merely symbols of some invisible truth—appeals to the emotion and not to the intellect. This gloss on the creed of Christendom seems somewhat lacking in candor.

Thus, like many of my contemporaries, I am a religious outcast; I cannot enjoy, without sacrificing intellectual integrity, the immeasurable benefit of spiritual comradeship, the inner peace arising out of traditional forms of worship, the inspiration of noble motive—all of which I recognize as embodied in the discipline of the great religions of the world, such as Christianity and Buddhism. And while I rejoice in the advance of science, I deplore the desuetude of regular religious services, with their encouragement of worship and prayer, for the good reason that personal experience and the study of history convince me that this absence of the religious habit leads to an ugly chaos in private and public morals and to a subtle lowering of the sense of beauty—witness the idol of the subhuman, the prevalence of crude animalism, in much of the music, art, and literature of the twentieth century.

But to my mind there is one hopeful portent. Men of science endowed with the religious temperament are today reinterpreting the mystical meaning of the universe; and it is they who may bring about a new synthesis between our discovery of the true and our self-dedication to the beautiful and the good.

I Work for Russia

IV. How the Worker Lives*

By WALTER ARNOLD RUKEYSER

THERE seems to be a commonly accepted idea in this country that the Russian workman is kept in virtual bondage—that he cannot change his employment or move from place to place. I have been asked over here if it were true that "squads of workers were watched by the military equipped with guns to prevent them from quitting their jobs." Nothing could be farther from the truth. I am not attempting to describe the conditions under which the former kulaks are employed. I know nothing at first hand about these conditions. But as for our workers at Asbest—and there are some 13,000 of them—I can vouch for the fact that there exists nothing even approximating forced labor. As nearly as I could dig out from our employment records, I should say that we have at least a 100 per cent labor turnover yearly.

It is this huge turnover of workers which constitutes one of the major problems facing the administrative heads of the trusts today. At one period last fall we were running only between 50 and 60 per cent of the number of hands prescribed for that quarter of the plan. There are several reasons for this condition of affairs. First of all, there is the inherent nature of the Russian people, who by temperament love to travel. Next, there has existed until recently a shortage of commodities, and the worker has therefore had few other uses for his accumulated earnings. Lastly, there has been such a shortage of labor available for the tremendous efforts required by the speeded-up plan that competition between trusts for workers has resulted. One need only pick up the daily papers, particularly in such a place as Sverdlovsk, which is the industrial center for a large region, to see columns of advertisements wherein this or that trust is bidding for labor. This holding out of special inducements, such as higher wages and better living conditions, finally forced Moscow to prohibit such methods of drawing workers away from their present employment.

The same condition exists among engineers and skilled labor. It is true that technicians are supposed to sign an employment contract, usually for two years. However, there is a large turnover with this class of labor as well as with the actual hands. An engineer's wife may find it preferable to live in Moscow or Leningrad rather than out in the Urals at the mines, or the engineer himself may receive a call from some comrade in another trust offering better terms of employment, and so on. Whereupon he will arrange for his release or transfer. Recently, however, this condition became so acute that all technicians and office workers have been asked to sign a pledge that they will remain at their present jobs until the completion of the plan.

Now let us follow the daily life of the worker. As explained in the previous article, he works under conditions of safety and hygiene laid down strictly by the national code, enforced and modified to meet local conditions by the contracts between the individual trade unions and the respective trusts. These conditions are further controlled by frequent visits of delegates of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection.

At Asbest the earlier large, non-private barracks have

* The fourth of a series of six articles. The fifth, on the American Engineer at Work, will appear in the issue of June 10.—EDITOR THE NATION.

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almost entirely given way to new multi-family apartments. These are for the most part two-story houses, built of wood, semi-fireproofed by stuccoing inside and out with asbestos plaster, and then whitewashed. The rooms are light and airy and of sufficient size to accommodate two, possibly three, persons, allowing four square meters per person. Ample latrine, bath, and lavatory facilities are provided. There is usually a communal kitchen on each floor, accommodating, I should say, up to four families. Large built-in brick stoves for baking are provided. However, the Russian worker seems wedded to his "primus," a spirit stove with a special burner and air pump which provides a quick hot flame.

I have heard it said that in the past the Russian peasant and worker, especially the latter, tasted meat probably not more than twenty times a year, on saints' days or other festive occasions. His main diet consisted of a thin barley soup, cucumbers, potatoes, cabbage, and bread. Butter, sugar, coffee were unknown luxuries. Today, although it is true that in the cooperative stores the quantities of commodities which he can buy are strictly rationed, this rationing has been so adjusted as to give him a fairly well-balanced diet. The heavy worker is, for example, allowed a greater quantity of meat, butter, and sugar per month than the one engaged in light manual labor or office work. Generally speaking, our workers at Asbest are rationed on meat, butter, eggs, sugar, coffee, cocoa, milk, and white flour. They can obtain cucumbers, cabbages, potatoes, black bread or meal in practically unlimited quantities. In cold weather, when transportation of perishables is possible, the diet is further varied by freshly frozen fish, which is supplied in large quantities. Smoked fish is nearly always available, as is cereal coffee; *mokko,* a caffeine-bearing drinkable, being imported, is to be had only in limited quantities. In 1929 the cooperative stores had their shelves loaded with all sorts of edibles. Roast goose, chicken, and duck, fresh and salted caviar, pickled meats, conserves (our canned goods), cocoa, and chocolates were to be had. In 1930 these commodities were rarely or never seen. Their disappearance was due to the breakdown of commodity prices on the world markets accompanying the world-wide depression, which was not accompanied by a corresponding reduction in the prices of such manufactured articles as machinery and the like. Since the Soviet Union had under the Five-Year Plan to import a specified quantity of the latter, for which they must pay by exporting in the main raw commodities, it followed that with falling prices for their exports the amount which they had to ship out in 1930 far surpassed the figures laid down when the plan was originally established and the world depression not anticipated. A temporary shortage of many commodities ensued, and this in turn resulted in an accumulation of money by the peasants and workers and its consequent withdrawal from circulation. This produced inflation, since the flood of rubles paid to the peasant and worker did not return to the state bank through the ordinary trade channels. Now that commodities are again plentiful, owing to the increased production in other nations and a relatively smaller purchasing power, there has again been established the so-called open market. It has recently been decreed by Moscow that rationing of all commodities is to be done away with immediately, except in the case of certain foodstuffs, and it is anticipated that even these will be on the open list within six months. To stimulate sales of such manufactured goods as radios, electrical appliances, clothing, and sporting goods, the salespeople are to be stimulated to greater efforts through commissions on sales. In this way money will revert to the state bank, and slowly but surely the present inflated condition of the internal currency should rectify itself.

So, although the worker is subject to some food rationing, he is by no means kept at the starvation-point. Far from it. Furthermore, everything is being done to encourage the worker and his family to eat at the state-operated *stolovarias* (restaurants or cafeterias). Here he gets an ample meal for very little money. For example, at Asbest or Sverdlovsk a typical meal would consist of a fish or meat soup, always served with hunks of fish or meat in it, a fish or meat stew with rice, potatoes, carrots, and some green vegetable, black or perhaps "gray" bread, a *sliatky* (sweet) such as pudding or gelatine with conserves, and finally tea. Butter and sugar were "deficit" commodities and not served, but in January they again made their appearance. Such a meal would cost sixty to seventy-five kopeks (about thirty cents on a gold basis). In addition to the cafeterias, restaurants, and hotels, all of which are run by the state, there are mechanized bread and cake bakeries of the most modern type, where food is also served. Finally, nearly all the workers at Asbest may augment their food supply by produce from their own gardens and by purchases from the peasants who come into the "bazaar" daily to sell their surplus at open-market prices.

Very interesting to me were the special restaurants for children only. Milk, eggs, cocoa, cereals, and the like are always available in these special eating places for children. I was also interested in the apparent lack of certain vitamin-producing foods and, following the shortage of live stock which resulted from the resistance of the peasants to too rapid collectivization last spring, the shortage of fats. Nevertheless, one thing which impressed itself strongly upon my mind was the healthy appearance of the children, whether in the cities or in the country. The enforced educational system which affects every person in Russia under the new literacy laws stresses child welfare and hygiene. The children certainly are not being neglected in the Soviet Union.

The illiterate workers as well as the children are compelled to attend school. Practically all the mills and factories are equipped with classrooms, and it is a fascinating sight to see the workers after their shift is finished—some of them with beards to their chests—poring over their ABC's and three R's. The health and hygiene clinics also present an interesting aspect of life in Russia today. At Asbest three hospitals have just been completed, the largest with 120 beds, equipped with the most modern surgical and medical facilities. In the cities the hospitals rank with those to be found in any other country. An American engineer acquaintance of ours who had just come up from Georgia had his wife and child ill with typhoid in the hospital in Moscow. Though they were critically ill when they reached the hospital, the attention they received there was of such high order that they both fully recovered. My friend was loud in his praises of the facilities and the treatment. Even in small places medical attention and hygiene are excellent.

Drinking was still prevalent everywhere I went in Russia. The government, through its state-trust distilleries, wineries, and breweries, now controls the manufacture and sale of all spirits. The beer is of low alcoholic content,

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probably not over 3½ to 4 per cent. The wines are extremely palatable, and are labeled according to well-known foreign vintages. The worker, however, contents himself mainly with beer and vodka. *Kvass,* a mildly fermented cereal beverage, is widely consumed and corresponds roughly to our near-beers. Vodka is a generic term. It may be distilled from wheat or other cereals, from apples or other fruit, from plain sugar, and so on. It is practically the same as grain alcohol, was formerly sold at 100 proof or higher, and now averages about 40 to 45 per cent alcohol by volume. The better grades are not bad, to our taste, *zubrovka,* for example, having a delicate taste of the sweet or buffalo grass from which it derives its name. The ordinary types, however, such as are supplied to the workmen (but never on pay days!), are quite as unpalatable as our grain alcohol and are usually drunk with a bit of citrus rind or apple therein. Tremendous educational efforts are being made to eliminate drinking from the life of the peasant and worker. Everywhere, in every station, every hotel, every factory, one sees forceful posters depicting some phase of the drink evil. Most of the younger generation won't touch alcohol in any form, and I have seen the Young Pioneers (the Communist Boy Scouts of Russia) many times attempting to restrain some grown-up from over-indulgence.

As Asbest there are three movie houses, or *kinos,* as they are called. When these are not being used for the frequent "meetings," or for G. P. U. trials, or "spectacles" (in which the worker shows off his histrionic talents), one can see movies and sometimes good ones. They are of the silent type, usually on a revolutionary or propaganda theme, and occasionally outstanding in technique. The acting is invariably of a high order.

Eight Who Must Not Die

By DOROTHY VAN DOREN

ON March 24 last seven young white men and two girls dressed in men's overalls hopped a slow freight moving south along the Memphis and Charlotte Railroad in northern Alabama. Already on the freight were a crowd of young Negro boys—some stories say as many as nineteen or twenty, not riding together but distributed along the various cars of the train. A couple of men along the way as the train passed saw that a fight was going on between Negroes and whites. Since they were some distance away they could not distinguish the faces of the boys and were not able, of course, to identify them later. But in the course of the fight the white men were thrown off the train, all but one who landed between two cars and was dragged back to safety by one of the Negroes. The men who were thrown off were not too much injured to rush to the nearest station at Steventon, tell their story to the telegraph operator, and have a wire sent to the train a station or two up ahead. By the time the train reached Paint Rock, Alabama, it was met by the sheriff and his deputies, all the Negroes who were on board—twelve by now—were taken off, the two girls in overalls were likewise removed, and the whole party was taken to the Scottsboro jail.

At this point the stories of the affair begin to differ. One account declares that the girls were in a fainting condition, sobbing, speechless, having evidently been subjected to some horrible experience. Another describes them as quite calm and not disposed to make any charges against the Negro boys until after they had conferred with the white officials and learned that young ladies who ride unchaperoned with Negro youths in freight cars must of necessity consider themselves raped, and raped they thereupon decided they had been. Whatever the truth, the girls were examined shortly after they left the train by two physicians in Scottsboro, who found them in good physical condition, not bruised, not fainting, not, apparently, seriously affected by whatever experience they had passed through. There were evidences of sexual intercourse but indications that it had taken place some hours before. They were mill girls, one a little over twenty, one a little under; the older one had been divorced. The fact that they had been bumming a ride in men's clothes would perhaps indicate, even without the subsequent information about them that came to light, that they were at least somewhat casual in their dealings with young men. But by the time the newspapers got around to reporting the story, it had taken on considerable local color. The Chattanooga *Times* for March 26 declared:

> And as her story [that of Victoria Price, the older of the two] was being unfolded, the Negroes were telling jokes in another part of the bastile. Nasty jokes, unafraid, denying to outsiders they were guilty, laughing, laughing, joking, joking, unafraid of the consequences, beasts unfit to be called human.

At this point it had been established to the satisfaction of local officials and the populace that the girls had been subjected to a fiendish series of assaults by nine of the young Negroes, three of the twelve taken from the train having somehow escaped. Again, according to the Chattanooga *Times,* "the crime was one of the most horrible ever perpetrated in the United States, and both Jackson and Madison counties are aroused to an extent that justice will be demanded when the fiends are put to trial." The girls declared that their clothes had been torn from their bodies, that they had been attacked each by six Negroes, that all of them were armed with knives except two who had guns, that the assaults were actually perpetrated while their assailants had weapons in their hands. It was evident that feeling against the Negroes, never deeply sleeping, was thoroughly and dangerously aroused.

On March 30 a grand jury returned indictments for rape against the nine boys. Rape in Alabama is punishable with death, although the extreme penalty is invoked rarely, and then against Negroes charged with rape of white women. A week later, April 6, was the date set for the trial, it being also the day for horse-swapping in the community, when large crowds would naturally assemble at Scottsboro courthouse. It was evident that the whole matter would be soon over. Meanwhile two things happened: the Governor sent down a detachment of the National Guard to protect the

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prisoners—the soldiers with fixed bayonets were able to keep an interested mob from taking matters into its own hands; and a Chattanooga lawyer, Stephen Roddy by name, was asked by the Interdenominational Ministers' Alliance, at the instigation of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, to undertake the defense. When the trial opened, the judge designated the seven available members of the Scottsboro bar to defend the prisoners. Six of them made excuses; the seventh, Milo Moody, accepted the case. Mr. Roddy was also present, but declared he was only assisting the lawyer for the defense. This was because he was unfamiliar with the particularities of Alabama legal procedure, wished to be associated with a local attorney, and knew that if he were announced as officially engaged for the defense Moody would quit the case, being no longer obligated to engage in it. Two of the boys were tried separately ahead of the rest. They were the oldest of the lot, one of them having actually attained to the ripe age of twenty. The trial took a day, the jury was out an hour and a half. A crowd of 10,000 persons—which in a little town of something over a thousand inhabitants is quite a crowd—was milling around the courthouse, waiting to hear the verdict. When the jury returned, a great hush descended over the mass of waiting people—mostly men, for women and children had by order of the judge been excluded from the courtroom. The Chattanooga *Times* is once more eloquent:

> Thunderous applause late this afternoon greeted a Jackson County grand [*sic*] jury's verdict of guilty for Charlie Weems and Clarence Norris, Negro hobos, who were convicted of attacking a white girl. . . . Hardly had the echoes of the trial died away until the trial of Haywood Patterson, Chattanooga Negro, charged with the same offense, was resumed.

The *Times* might have added that a brass band, mysteriously evoked from nowhere, entertained the uproarious multitude with the "Star Spangled Banner" and "Dixie" immediately after the verdict was announced. The jury which was trying to reach a decision on seventeen-year-old Haywood Patterson at the moment must have been considerably aided in its deliberation. Although it is probable that a local jury, chosen under such circumstances, needed little outside aid.

The rest of the trial proceeded in due course. Eight of the boys were found guilty and sentenced to die in the electric chair. The ninth, a lad of fourteen, was too young for the death sentence. The State asked for life imprisonment. But seven of the jurors held out for death anyway, and the judge declared a mistrial. Only Victoria Price was willing to identify the defendants. Ruby Bates, the other girl, confessed that she could not do so. No other identification was made. Mrs. Price's testimony was conflicting throughout. Yet she was positive that the nine very black youths whom, presumably, she had never set eyes on before, were the ones out of the crowd on the train who had attacked her and her companion, although of course she was almost beside herself while she was trying vainly to defend her person from them.

On the whole the boys told a straightforward story. They had been on the train. Some of them had not even been in the freight car in which the fracas took place. Some of them had taken part in it—one of them, the youngest, Roy Wright, was the one who had reached out a hand and kept the white youth from falling beneath the cars. They had done nothing to the girls. Because they had not, they had not thought it necessary to leave the train as half a dozen Negroes did, though they, too, had ample opportunity to do so before it was stopped. The fact that they did not leave the train affords, on the whole, the strongest presumption of their innocence. For why a Negro, even a Negro of low intelligence as these boys evidently are, who has committed an attack on a white woman should remain at the scene of his crime when he has opportunity to leave it is a question that no rational person can answer.

The execution of the eight boys convicted was set for July 10. Hearing on a motion for a new trial, postponed to June 5, automatically sets aside this date. The boys are in Kilby Prison near Montgomery. They are too ignorant and bewildered to be aware of the legal steps that are being taken to save them. But steps are being taken: Competent lawyers have been hired for the defense by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and by the International Labor Defense. Application for appeal to a higher court will be made in due form and when proper. It is altogether possible that the Alabama Supreme Court will reverse the verdict and order a new trial. The basis for this assumption is the decision of the Supreme Court of the United States in the Arkansas cases that a trial in a court dominated by mob influence is not due process of law. Mr. Roddy was astute enough to put on the stand a commander of the National Guard and a local court official who testified that the demonstration after the first verdict in the courtroom and outside the courthouse was of such a nature as to have been overheard by the jurors who served in the seven subsequent cases. This testimony is part of the record.

The case has a number of complicated features, most of them the result of the dual defense. Both the Negro and the Communist organizations were early in the field; it is a matter of dispute, although it makes no difference, which was first. But efforts by both have been made to induce all the boys to allow their defense to be conducted by one of the groups and not the other, which has only confused the issue. It would be far simpler to combine forces, and probably far better from the standpoint of the boys' safety. Moreover, the tactics of the International Labor Defense, in line with its conduct of any part of the class struggle, are not calculated to appease Southern officials, from the governor down, or to predispose them in favor of Negro defendants. Categorical demands to free the boys at once, sent in droves of telegrams to various public officers, while undoubtedly good class-war tactics, are more likely to be irritating than otherwise effective. The point that should be at issue is that eight boys, black or white, seven of them under twenty years of age, should not die for a crime that they did not commit, and if they did not commit a crime, should receive the benefit of every legal safeguard to protect their rights and their lives. Unseemly squabbles among persons trying to defend them help them not at all. The sincerity of the defenders may be tested by their willingness to drop all their private disgruntlement, for whatever reason, and bend every effort unswervingly to the task of seeing that justice is done.

Finally, what of the persons immediately concerned in the case? The two girls were casuals, young women whose reputation is, to put it mildly, not of the best. Efforts of the defense attorney to discredit them at the trial were mostly circumvented, but enough was read into the record to make their testimony dubious. They are locally well

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known as prostitutes, supplementing their miserable wages as mill workers by the only other occupation they know. The nine Negro boys are likewise casuals. None of them can read or write. All have unsavory reputations. They have been accused of various petty crimes—gambling, thieving, more or less harmful mischief in general. They are not noble characters; it is a safe guess that not one of them will ever amount to much. They are the products of ignorance, of the most wretched and extreme poverty, of dirt, disorder, and race oppression. Yet there is no reason in the world why they should not have every legal right accorded to the finest and most cultivated person in the land. They are poor and ignorant and irresponsible. All the more should the state protect them, all the more should every device of the courts and every safeguard of the law be invoked to the end that justice be served. No picture in recent annals of law-breaking is more touching than that of these eight very black boys in the death cells in Alabama. They are kept two in a cell; they gratefully receive gifts of candy and cigarettes. With the irrepressible gaiety of their race, they can laugh and joke in the shadow of the electric chair. Yet they are in essence bewildered. "We don't know the rights of it all, Boss, or who ought to help us; we just want to get out of here." This is about all they can say, about as far as they can think.

It is worth while, as a last word, to consider for a moment to what sort of world they will get out, if they do get out. Earnest persons who want to help somewhere and do not quite know how might ponder this point. They will reenter a world of poverty, ignorance, and race repression. Their chances of being in it a credit either to themselves or to their country are not large. Their chances even of living out their lives peaceably and dying in their beds are not large. They are the children of violence, and it is altogether likely that violence will overtake them in the end.

In the Driftway

AN "old newspaperman himself" objected at length to the Drifter's interpretation of the popularity of the circus as a satisfying sublimation of human desires and frailties. The letter, while it came long ago, is still good. In fact, it is better than it was, since at this moment summer is leading out the painted caravans along the dusty roads, and the mind of many a small boy is preoccupied with the caverns of thirst known as elephants.

> I am not doing this because of an itch to write [the letter goes]. When a fellow has finished eight years of tough breaks on a Republican daily the glamor of type fades to a gray blur on an uncertain horizon. But I do object to your interpretation of the Lillian Leitzel number. As one who trooped with a modern tent aggregation—sixty acts, count 'em, sixty—I was privileged to get a sore back, a twisted shoulder, several broken teeth, and a damaged conscience. (Yes, even the "reserved seat" circuses must resort to chiseling to send something home to mother and little Abie two or three times a month.) What I am trying to say is that the circus is the reason why in olden times actors and jugglers were a proscribed caste, to be driven, like their brethren the gipsies, out of town at sundown.
>
> The day's routine of an average circus even in our day is a routine of beastliness, ugliness, hatefulness, with a type of cynicism that says in effect: Here, public, is what you really pay to see—hard guys, tough babies who can take it on the chin and pretend it doesn't hurt. The circus is never beautiful. My first reaction to a circus (at the unbelievable age of four and a fraction) was one of fear instead of delight. But that may have been due to a natural trait common to all Semites. The performers were unreal persons whose strength was something to avoid, and the wire-walkers a species of serpent with legs. As to the lower mammals and lesser carnivora, I shut my eyes more than once while my parents tugged at my new velvet coat in the mistaken belief that sleep and not fear accounted for the seeming indifference.
>
> Early in the Gamaliel dynasty when the doughty Mr. Hays was ordering the brave marines to shoot train-hoppers on sight, I trooped with one of America's biggest shows on earth. The twenty dollars a month and rations looked like a fortune at a time when, as during the present "recession," jobs were prized like heirlooms in New England. The first day out I confirmed the impression I had had on the occasion of my first circus treat. Everything was beastly, cruel, hateful. Trainers were harsh, the tighted ladies tough and juiceless, the property bosses, like a Boston judge, believed all hired help to be ex-convicts and gunmen joining up to dodge detectives until trails grew cold.
>
> The "management" never once took the word of the cashiers; the latter never once relaxed vigilance over the "choppers." Short-changing, dipping, petty nickel-snatching, as well as major theft, were everyday business. The "artistes," possibly in self-defense, formed their own little band of saboteurs, racketeers, agents-provocateurs to get their three square meals daily from the bosses.
>
> As for the canaille that came in thousands to pay double price for something that was inferior in quality to any second-rate drama, I concluded they came only to see something they could not find anywhere else, namely, the organized cruelty of men beating animals and men beating one another. The mob, I felt sure, knew that the "artistes" on their lofty and perilous perches were driven to their jobs as surely as any cat is driven to its little shelf in the cage. The circus, I said (to myself, of course), was ma[illegible] last exhibition of unrestrained jungle play. That's wh[illegible] made it good pay. Men are still savage and will pay be reminded of that fact.

* * * * *

THE Drifter has neither the argument nor the inclination to deny anything his correspondent has said about the circus, though he feels secure—and happy too—in maintaining that most children see the circus as a beautiful and delightful rather than as a fearful spectacle. If the Drifter were a cynic he might go so far as to say that the circus is in its reality no more gross or unsavory than most of the glamorous toys the world admires and covets. But that is an ancient comment, and, besides, the Drifter is not a cynic. He cannot agree with the last paragraph of the letter, however. He admits that men have a strong hangover of savagery buried not so deeply within them, but he thinks it can find very little satisfaction in a circus. The cruelty in a circus is not apparent enough. It finds much more obvious and much more satisfying expression in murder and in the general run of gangster activities. The columns of a newspaper, just between one old newspaperman and another, have more appeal to the savage in all of us than any circus could possibly have. THE DRIFTER

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Correspondence

The Millennium—Why Not?

To the Editor of The Nation:

Sir: For ten years big business has been the government. For half a century before that it was the larger part of the government. Today the enormously complicated administrative vehicle it has been building up ever since the Civil War is out of gear and threatening an absolute collapse. Will big business ever bring "glad, confident morning" again in these United States? Has it not been utterly discredited and exposed? Is it not today bankrupt of leadership and naked to its enemies? Can even the greatest of engineers and the second greatest Secretary of the Treasury restore its prestige?

What is the alternative to its restoration, to another cycle of factitious and arthritic prosperity followed by another breakdown with its bread lines and its suicides? Must Americans turn their backs on the individualism of their forefathers and call agrarianism, socialism, or communism to the rescue? Before resorting to such means, why not get away from the doctrines and methods of big business by adopting an opposite philosophy—one founded not on pelf and power, but on freedom, justice, and humanity, and on the recognition that the world is now so small that all prosperity, if it is to endure, must have an international basis? Why not adopt the following platform for a libertarian and cosmopolitan party?

1. Absolute free trade.
2. Unrestricted immigration.
3. Cancelation of war debts.
4. Relegation of liquor control to the States.
5. Minority representation.
6. Protection of Negroes in their constitutional rights.
7. Immediate independence for the Philippines and noninterference with Latin American or any other nations.
8. Enactment of a constitutional amendment providing for the immediate induction into office of the newly elected President and Congressmen.
9. Continuous prosecution of public works on an adjustable scale, capable of vast enlargement during emergencies.
10. Taxation of the unearned increment of land.

This may be a program for the millennium, but why not think it over?

Brooklyn, May 10 F. Wells

In Defense of Surveys

To the Editor of The Nation:

Sir: Gustavus Adolphus Steward exhibits rather more spleen than understanding in his article Among Those Surveyed in *The Nation* of May 6. I cannot leave it unnoticed since I was implicated in three of his references: first, by my connection with Ohio State University, the reference to which, so far as I know, was inaccurate; second, as the letterhead chairman of the Interracial Seminar, which I was unable to accompany; and, third, as a contributor to the book published last year by Charles Johnson.

"Exploratory visits" are the beginning of a change of attitude and a stimulus to fact-finding. If one accepts the prevailing attitude in the South, a visit to Tuskegee is a revelation which cannot fail to have enlarging emotional possibilities. A visit to Negro business concerns may be a constructive shock to those who have seen only Negro janitors. Today I am taking a large class to have tea at the house of a Negro physician. For those who think tea will be tasteless if drunk co-racially, it is a genuine education to try it. The Interracial Seminar was for the same purpose.

The survey method is immature, but human relations are very complicated and intangible, so that the trial-and-error method must be used before the right technique is discovered. The book of Charles Johnson gathered facts. They may be uninteresting, but they are at least facts and available. Mr. Steward asks two questions: What has become of the facts so far gathered, and what good do they do? A vast store of information has been collected. Undoubtedly money and time have been wasted in the search for valid and important material. This is true in every research, but one discovered fact may justify the whole cost. Correlations between living conditions of Negroes and morbidity and crime have been the starting-points of new community policies. This race material is still in process of being understood.

Criticism is valuable, but such a sweeping indictment as Mr. Steward's is merely misleading.

Columbus, Ohio, May 4 Herbert A. Miller

Books for Trotzky

To the Editor of The Nation:

Sir: I have a letter from Leon Trotzky stating that in the fire which burned down the house he was living in all his books were lost. Among them were many which had been sent to him by American authors. He is making a special study of American economic and social life and of American thought, and is greatly hindered by the absence in Constantinople of any library. Now that his own books are destroyed, the case is rather desperate.

It has occurred to me that a letter in *The Nation* would serve to notify most of the authors who have sent him books that another copy would be a timely gift. Those who have written something that they think Trotzky really ought to read have now a unique opportunity!

Croton-on-Hudson, N. Y., April 30 Max Eastman

The Tariff Commission Again

To the Editor of The Nation:

Sir: Much has been said for and against the creation and operation of the Tariff Commission, but the one event that has significance in the operations of that body has been little discussed publicly. On the ground that the commission had not paid enough attention to the effects of last year's drought President Hoover rejected its recommendations for a decrease in duty on three agricultural products. The comparison of the original recommendation for a 50 per cent reduction in duty with the accepted final decrease, if any, when the commission again submits its report, may be interesting.

The creation of the commission was widely spoken of as a forward step. It took the tariff out of politics, provided a fact-finding body. True, the President reserves the right to veto the commission's recommendations. In that we sense a slight discrepancy in reasoning, since the commission with its well-organized staff of experts would hardly overlook any important factor that might cause a rejection of its findings. We may, however, for purposes of control, consider the power of veto well vested. Anyone dealing with the Tariff Commission gets usually the impression that its staff is interested in tackling the problems on hand with an open mind and a fact-finding spirit.

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It is hardly new to state that the Tariff Commission is compelled to work upon an uneconomic basis—that of trying to sell but not to buy abroad. Equalization of costs of production along American standards does not lessen the demand for a product. It does serve to increase often the cost to the consumer, thereby benefiting only the middleman rather than the original producer for whom the tariff was apparently devised. We find, however, that in spite of varying ideas and points of view, foreign governments have willingly cooperated with the Tariff Commission to help it accomplish its tasks fairly for all concerned. They have accepted, also, its findings with fine sportsmanship.

In every investigation by the Tariff Commission one thought is paramount when establishing a comparison of costs of production. This is that weighted representative figures for a period of years must be taken into consideration. This was probably done when reductions on the three products were being considered. Yet the reductions were rejected on the ground that insufficient attention had been paid to conditions prevailing in one single year. It therefore leaves these alternatives: the commission must either bargain in considering the new percentage of reduction, or admit that as a fact-finding body it failed to note a factor important enough in itself to throw out any conclusions arrived at by the study of conditions over a period of years. The implications of the question are self-evident, when we consider that everyone here and abroad has pinned his hope on the ability of the commission to act as a capable, thorough, scientific, and independent fact-finding body. The immediate reaction to these recent developments among the people who have dealings with that body has been a sense of futility and hopelessness. But a lack of confidence in the independence of the Tariff Commission will not help matters.

At the present time the United States may act on the theory that countries abroad feel the economic pinch acutely, that their complaints may go unheeded, and that economic pressure may yet be used. It will do well to keep in mind, however, that silence does not necessarily mean a lack of opinion, and that every country has statutes that can be brought forward when necessary for its existence. It is good business policy not to irk our friends overmuch.

Washington, May 15 JOSEPH GIBERNAU

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Books, Art, Music, Drama

Winter's End

By DAVID MORTON

From some old need of seeing things in bloom,
I watch the young girls strolling down the spring,
Where green earth and blue sky have built a room
That holds not anywhere a lovelier thing
Than these slow forms of languor and delight,
Who laugh or sigh, not knowing what they do,
And sway and bend and turn or left or right
For no more cause than that the sky is blue.

And I might travel far and find much less
Of spring's ambiguous gesturing over the earth,
Than these cool shapes that light airs color and press,
So tentative and vague I count their worth
In tinted mists that are the first spring flowers
On dim horizons that we watch for hours.

Another Book About Himself

Dawn. By Theodore Dreiser. Horace Liveright. $5.

SURELY since the beginning of time no writer has been more impervious to criticism, for good or for ill, than this Theodore Dreiser. In spite of his final popularity his work has never lost any of the merits with which it began, nor, in spite of mountains of adverse and friendly criticism, any of the faults. His style, the despair of all right-thinking people, grows, if anything, worse with each book. In all the 589 pages that make up this autobiography of his early youth, there is not one that will not irritate a reader who has any respect for the common decencies of prose. What an array of verbless, battered, broken-backed sentences! He writes hardly a paragraph that is not stuffed with such amateurish asides to the reader as "you may be sure," or "if you please," or "as you may well guess." He is vague where he ought to be precise and pedantically precise where precision is pointless. He seems to have only the haziest ideas about the meanings of words. He tells us that he was *"literally* blazing physically." He describes masturbation as "this *exotic* practice." His phrases are sometimes downright illiterate: "His work was plainly like he was." Often what ought to be simple narrative sentences are so equivocal that one actually cannot tell what he means. Apologists for Dreiser's writing have told us that the man is too passionately in earnest to be bothered with the mere embroidery of style, too concerned with his message to care whether or not he delivers it gracefully. But such an explanation will hardly do. For Dreiser frequently strains for the purple passage—usually of the Ingersoll school (see the paragraph on page 49, for example, beginning: "Come now, let us erect to youth an altar, and against the sapphire sea of time set the scarlet flame of memory!"). He is continually trapped by the pretentious cliché, lured by the falsely elegant. A writer merely unconscious of style does not describe a man as being "frizzled as to his gray hair" or write that a family "laughed and talked and jested betimes with whomsoever would have to do with them." Closely allied to all this is his constant pseudo-scientific jargon. As a child he is afraid to go into the dark woods. "Tell me, oh, physicists and chemists," he apostrophizes, "why so great a fear, so roiling a sensitivity, in a physical chemism four or five years of age?" As a youth, in the presence of a prostitute he finds himself "ecstasized sensorially." And this is what happens when he returns after his first few months at college:

> Approaching Chicago and my own home, I experienced, for the first time in my life, I think, a sense of change in myself—something more toward individuality—the intense centripetal integrality of the same—as opposed to what hitherto might have been looked upon as a merged or group feeling—integrality with the other members of my family and home—my mother, of course, the central centripetal star of the same and one not to be affected, let alone reduced or modified in any way.

One can explain why such a sentence is appalling, but surely not by saying that Dreiser is too unpretentious, too concerned with bald simplicity or common straightforwardness, to trouble about anything so fancy or unimportant as style.

Nearly all critics have regretted Dreiser's prolixity. In the present book the prolixity grows almost fabulous. There are nearly 300,000 words, the equivalent of four or five novels of ordinary size, and they carry his projected autobiography only up to his nineteenth or twentieth year. But Dreiser has carried this vice to so great a length that it becomes one of his outstanding merits. Say what you will, our experiences impress us and remain with us, other things being equal, in proportion to their duration, and no one who has read this book through is likely soon to forget it. In its mere prolixity lies much of its remarkably convincing quality. It is crowded with pointless and irrelevant details and episodes; but so is life. It is enormously repetitious; but so is life. It makes a hundred false starts; again and again we are told of an experience, or of the expectation of an experience, that seems about to lead somewhere, but that in fact leads nowhere—as in life. In his recital Dreiser seems to use no principle of selection whatever. And neither does life. Seeing everything on all sides, and again and again, as the author saw it, the reader comes to feel that he has almost lived through this career himself.

But with this Dreiser has other and less dubious virtues which have always given his work its real distinction—an astonishing memory, amazing eyes for details, for character, and for physical scenes, an immense curiosity and awareness regarding all things of common interest, a profound sense of the wonder and mystery of life. As a boy he seemed to have a "life-hunger" that swallowed everything with indiscriminate greediness. "Would that I were able to suggest in prose," he writes at one point, "the throb and urge and sting of my first days in Chicago." But he does just that. He leaves us a memorable picture of the Chicago of those days, with its streets and sidewalks built up from four to six feet above the land level, the dirty, narrow, and traffic-laden Chicago River, the rats overrunning the city, the slums worthy of the art of a Hogarth, and everything, apparently, "a source of wonder and delight" to him.

To crown all, there is Dreiser's intense sincerity and unparalleled candor, surely the greatest single merit that any autobiographer can have. And in that merit he is comparable to Pepys, Rousseau, and Boswell; certainly his confessions ring truer than Rousseau's. I do not believe he ever attributes any motives to himself loftier than those he actually had, or attempts to make any situation more glamorous than it really was. What we see is a moony boy, not over-fond of work, full of vague day dreams, with no practical or definite aim in life, brought up in depressing poverty, given a hopelessly inadequate formal education, first at various Catholic schools whenever his parents could afford to pay for it, then at public school; later drifting from job to job—newsboy, dish-washer in a filthy Greek restaurant, stove polisher, helper in a large hardware

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establishment; finally taken out of all this for a year by a Miss Simpson, one of his former public-school teachers who seemed to detect possibilities in him and paid his expenses to the State university; then drifting through various jobs again—real-estate helper, laundry-wagon driver, and instalment collector, a job from which he was dismissed for holding back $25. And always, even as a boy, his great preoccupation, his great obsession, was sex. "The hot fire nature had lighted in my body . . . harried me from hell to hell." For his passion was constantly thwarted—by poverty, by a conviction that his appearance was shabby and unimpressive, by a fixed belief that he had made himself impotent by self-abuse, and by an almost incredible awkwardness, bashfulness, and mental and lingual paralysis in the presence of women and girls.

If Dreiser does not spare himself, neither does he spare anyone else. Few autobiographers, surely, have treated their immediate family as he has. He pictures it as "peculiarly nebulous, emotional, unorganized, and traditionless." His father is everywhere made to appear as a pietistic and conventionally moral Catholic bigot. He tells how his brother Paul, the song-writer, forged a check in his father's name, was suspected of robbing a store, was thrown into jail twice, and later lived with a woman who kept a house of prostitution. He tells of his brother Rome's constant drunkenness, disappearances, and vandalism. To be sure, he changes the names of his sisters, but he tells of the promiscuity of one or two of them, and of how Amy brought disgrace on the family when it lived in a small town by becoming pregnant. Only his mother comes out consistently well by the ordinary moral standards. When he mentions his own sexual adventures or those of others, he almost invariably mentions the real name (so far as the reader can make out) of the girl involved, together with her town, her neighborhood, or the business firm for which she worked. Many of these women are now presumably the mothers of grown families: let us sincerely hope that none of their husbands, children, friends, or enemies chance to read this book. The conventional morality which Dreiser so much despises calls the man who does this sort of thing a cad or a bounder; but we must remember that in autobiography or reminiscence the vices of the man are the virtues of the writer. It is this unparalleled candor, perhaps more than anything else, that will keep this book alive.

Dreiser's curiously crude and naive philosophy remains as unmodified as his style. He cannot help stopping every once in a while for a bitter denunciation of the Catholic church. He is constantly deriding "morality," but his own notions on the subject are in the highest degree vague and superficial. Ethics he describes as "purely minor group arrangements having no relationship to the larger movements and positive and dominating forces of the universe." If by the "larger movements" he is alluding to such things as the orbit of Halley's comet, he is, one can only suppose, correct; but ethics might still have some slight importance for mankind. At another point his condemnations become more sweeping, involving, indeed, the whole "visible scheme of things." "What," he shouts, "cooking, eating, coition, job holding, growing, aging, losing, winning, in so changeful and passing a scene as this, important? Bunk!" But he does not seem to have troubled to ask himself, Important to whom? Not to that distant cloud of suns called the Milky Way, perhaps; but reasonably so to ourselves. One is tempted to inquire exactly what Dreiser's definition of importance is. What determines importance? Who confers importance? But we need not enter upon these metaphysical subtleties, for Dreiser's own huge works of fiction and autobiography are sufficient evidence that he himself regards even the pettiest details of life as of immense importance, else he could not have gone to such pains to record them. By "morality," moreover, one soon discovers, Dreiser means exactly what the man in the street means—conventional (usually Victorian) *sexual* morality. He excuses all sex lapses, no matter what their results, and many shortcomings of other kinds, on the ground that men and women are poor, irresponsible "chemisms." But he is hardly more consistent here than elsewhere, for on his last page he admits that in the individual's conduct the interests of "organized society" may sometimes have to be considered, and he speaks of the 50 per cent profit of his instalment-company boss, and of a "petty little beast" of a Catholic priest, in terms that sound to me strangely like those of moral indignation.

Yet the final marvel, of course, is not that there is still so much that is crude and callow in Dreiser, but that, in the teeth of the early environment he pictures here, he managed to survive with the astonishing qualities he has. "I must have been a very deceptive person," he writes at one point, "seemingly mild, aimless, indifferent, dreamy—particularly in regard to trivial things and matters—whereas in reality, in regard to my own deepest currents and interests, at least, I could be adamant." And in this Gibraltar-like quality lies the main secret of the stature that Dreiser has attained among American writers.

HENRY HAZLITT

Soviet Recognition

Why Recognize Russia? By Louis Fischer. Jonathan Cape and Harrison Smith. $2.

MR. FISCHER has here condensed and popularized the story of Soviet-American relations—or lack of relations. He draws heavily for his material upon the present reviewer's "American Policy Toward Russia Since 1917," which he cites occasionally, and upon his own recently published work, "The Soviets in World Affairs," which he cites frequently. His new book, however, supplements rather than reiterates the content of the other volumes mentioned. It can only be described as a very large two dollars' worth and a necessary and useful piece of excellent journalism which deserves wide distribution.

Mr. Fischer might be described either as a journalist with scholarly inclinations or as a scholar with journalistic leanings. But the gods of the academic chairs are jealous gods and will probably not admit Mr. Fischer as yet to the inner [illegible] for all his footnotes and pretenses to erudition. His [illegible] newspaper style. His history is a bit feeble, and his international law totters dangerously in places. The first sentence depicts the Soviet Union as one of the "six" great Powers, though by all reasonable standards of reckoning there are seven. The Fourteenth Amendment does *not* declare financial obligations of the kind involved in Russian-American relations "illegal and void." The "U. S. Privateer Alabama" was neither a privateer nor did it belong to the United States. Other errors of fact and reasoning are more numerous than they would have been if the author had given more time and care to the preparation of his work. But these are peccadillos and Mr. Fischer is not writing for historians nor for international jurists.

The real value of the book lies not in its summary of Soviet-American diplomacy nor in its treatment of the legal aspects of recognition, upon which others have written more fully and more illuminatingly, but in its admirable compilation of the lunacies of the anti-Bolshevik wowsers from Father Walsh and Matthew Woll to Ralph Easley and Hamilton Fish. These worthies are hoisted by their own petards and allowed to make themselves ridiculous by their own quoted statements, which are amusingly contrasted with those of Senator Borah, Ivy Lee, John Bassett Moore, and other advocates of Soviet recognition. It is untrue, however, as the cover blurb declares,

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that "the author makes no plea for recognition." He cries to the heavens for recognition—and rightly so, since all the arguments against it are nonsense. But Mr. Fischer would do well to recognize that all arguments are irrelevant and that the State Department remains in what he aptly calls "the rut of ancient stubbornness" not because of law or logic but because of the hysteria of bureaucrats and politicians, who require red herrings to distract public attention from their own ineptitude, and because of the inflexible determination of official Washington to make the world safe for capitalism. If logic and common sense play any part in the State Dpartment's Russian policy, evidence thereof has not as yet been forthcoming. Washington is moved only by considerations of cupidity and political expediency. Such considerations may be furnished by an enlightened public opinion, demanding that the Administration remove its head from the sand pile and take official cognizance of the largest country on earth and one of the best customers of the United States. Mr. Fischer has made a notable contribution toward creating such an opinion. He therefore deserves the thanks of all who may still have faith in the efficacy of organized intelligence in international relations.

FREDERICK L. SCHUMAN

Our Superstitious Sex Morals

Sin and Sex. By Robert Briffault. The Macaulay Company. $3.

IT is an odd and ironic fact that in a country in which sin and sex have been made so synonymous sin should be so popular and sex so taboo. The Puritans did not make it so. They made sin unpopular but not sex. They objected to certain violations of the sexual game, as they thought it ought to be played, but not to sex as a physical fact. Cotton Mather and Thomas Shepard wrote about sex with all the candor of Elizabethans. It was the Victorians who put sin into sex—and made what was so natural so abhorrent. The Puritan candor about sex became a vulgar recollection to the Victorians, who were kind enough to favor sex in private but denounced it in public. The effect of those denunciations is living with us yet. Despite the agitated antics of the flapper, the rise of nudity groups, and the passionate popularity of Sigmund Freud and Havelock Ellis, we have not yet escaped the sexophobic philosophy of our Victorian ancestors. We still insist, like the Englishmen and Americans of the last century, that sex is something to be experienced but not discussed—except by way of ribald joke or smutty allusion. Our universities touch the subject gingerly, or not at all. We remain subservient to church and politics on the vital question of birth control.

Robert Briffault's book "Sin and Sex" attacks all these sexophobic attitudes and the type of civilization that has created and continued them. It is far-and-away superior to the many volumes which have been written on this theme in recent years. While its approach is fundamentally sociological, it does not avoid the psychological implications of the problem. Briffault begins his analysis by tracing the origins of sexophobia to Christianity, and holds that it is only in Christian countries that morality has become primarily associated with sex. Attacking the "Adam-and-Eve anthropologists," especially Westermarck and Malinowski, he maintains that chastity did not exist as a concept among primitive and ancient peoples but was the invention of Christianity. Christianity, following in the path of Judaism, founded its moral code upon the authority of tradition instead of upon the authority of reason. The Greeks were the one people in ancient times, Briffault contends, who considered righteousness as relative instead of absolute. The Jews and Christians based their logic upon a categorical moral imperative which made it impossible for them to discuss sex in the same manner that one would discuss science. As a result of this religious absoluteness, Christian cultists, in their defense of righteousness, have become "the most pestilently unrighteous people in the world." With the advent of capitalism, Briffault observes, the vicious one-sidedness of Christian morality, with its overpowering sexophobia, has at last been clearly revealed. "Quick at suppressing literature," Briffault writes, Western morality is "slow at suppressing war; zealous in the abolition of obscene post cards, [it is] lukewarm in the abolition of obscene slums; active in putting down white slavery, [it is] but apathetic in putting down wage slavery; alert in preventing vice, [it is] but slothful in putting down starvation; shocked at clothing insufficient for purposes of modesty, [it is] but indifferent to clothing for purposes of warmth."

Briffault's whole argument in "Sin and Sex" is that we should base our morality upon reason instead of superstition. He indicates how impossible this has been in the past, because the very nature of our moral superstitions has thwarted the approach of reason. Our anthropolgists, our psychologists, and our social scientists in general have been so intimidated by the ethical taboos of our culture that they have been more interested in moral fictions than in amoral facts. As a consequence, nine-tenths of the theories which we commonly hold about the sexual life of man are false. The realization of the fact that the natural propensities of *homo sapiens* are promiscuous instead of monogamous means that we must understand at the very beginning that our present marital organization, with its economic motivation and legal coercions, is in conflict with biological impulses and not in harmony with them. "Monogamic patriarchal societies," the author states, "are particularly abnormal and monstrous in a biological sense." While this does not mean that we should live as primitives in order to be in harmony with our natural urges, it does mean that we must appreciate the conflict that exists between biological impulse and cultural ethic, and apply ourselves to the complicated and delicate task of resolving that contradiction.

V. F. CALVERTON

Who Was Jane Austen?

Jane Austen. By R. Brimley Johnson. E. P. Dutton and Company. $5.

MR. JOHNSON subtitles his book "Her Life, Her Work, Her Family, and Her Critics." This is, of course, a very large order and one that in less than 300 pages should hardly be attempted without considerable intrepidity. But it is true that many things are already known about Jane Austen, and Mr. Johnson would hardly claim that he had done much more than bring them together in outline. He is, of course, an ardent admirer of his subject. He has faithfully studied all the records, he has assiduously read every word she ever wrote, he has consulted her descendants and their opinions of their great aunt. And in general it seems safe to say that he has completely failed to grasp the character of the woman he so deeply admires.

Jane Austen was above all else a wit. She is, indeed, one of the few wits among her sex whose works have endured. Except for that grace of wit she would have differed little from many women who had, with her, acuteness of observation and elegance of language to set it down. This is not to disparage her but to exalt her above other women novelists and most men. But it is a fact that her uncritical admirers often lose sight of in their obeisance to her undoubted genius. They, and Mr. Johnson is one of them, are at great pains to prove that Miss Austen as a person was all that was gentle, tender, good-tempered, kind-hearted, democratic—Mr. Johnson takes

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pains to show that she "was not a snob"—that she was, in short, unfailingly noble. It is true that her letters, sharp, stinging, full of the most pointed of criticism, can be offered as evidence of some quality in her other than sweetness. But Mr. Johnson explains, after quoting the famous phrase about the unfortunate lady, Mrs. Blount, who looked "exactly as she did in September, with the same broad face, diamond bandeau, white shoes, pink husband, and fat neck," from one of Jane's letters to Cassandra Austen, that it "was the author of 'Northanger Abbey,' not Jane Austen" who wrote those unkind if witty lines. This seems to be denying Jane Austen a quality that she possessed, if her letters are any proof, all her life, namely, malice. And so great was her skill that she could employ the weapon of malice delicately, delightfully, but without doubt to inflict a mortal wound. Mr. Johnson says incomprehensively of the letters: "They have not the sparkle of the novels . . . and make less attractive reading than those of many a less delightful author." I am willing to guess that they seem less attractive to him and to many of Jane Austen's admirers because they make her more the human being and less the saint without fault and without reproach that she has been described to be.

Aside from this worshipful attitude, which so tediously colors much of his book, Mr. Johnson has done some very careful work on the time of composition of the novels. He shows convincingly that "Sense and Sensibility" and "Pride and Prejudice" were not actually written when their author was twenty-one and twenty-three years old, but were probably drafted then, carefully revised, and only completed in the form in which we have them a good ten years later. There are other matters which will be of interest to Jane-Austenites. There is much useful information about the Austen family circle, there are careful descriptions of the locale of the novels and of Miss Austen's occupations, as far as they are known, while she was writing them. In some ways, therefore, this is a valuable book; only as a portrait of a very rare woman and unique genius does it woefully fail of its purpose.

DOROTHY VAN DOREN

Books in Brief

Ambrose Holt and Family. By Susan Glaspell. Frederick A. Stokes Company. $2.50.

This novel about a poet who built up around himself a shell of persecution so that he could, by transcending it, feel noble, and his wife who, although her father and husband thought her a fool, was in reality "beauty" and "truth," suffers from the fault of much contemporary American fiction. It is too clear. Having involved her characters in a series of fairly complicated situations, and having endowed them with another series of conflicting ideas, emotions, and characteristics, Miss Glaspell steps forward calmly and with a steady hand sets them all straight, points out what sort of person each one "really" is, and leaves everything as right and tight as it can possibly be. Ambrose Holt is an easy-going, inspired ne'er-do-well who walked out on his wife and small son some twenty-five years before the story opens; he walks back as casually on his son, his daughter-in-law, and his two grandchildren. The son is a poet but is obliged by the exigencies of love, marriage, and a rich and prosaic father-in-law to be a success in the cement business; the daughter-in-law ought to be satisfied by her charming home, her two splendid children, her handsome and successful husband, her agreeable social life. But somehow she is not. She is not being herself. The advent of her father-in-law enables her, for the first time, to be herself, to quarrel in the most salutary manner with her husband, to resolve all their lives into a steady and presumably lasting relationship. Even the careless Ambrose, dead after his impetuous life, will persist in watching over her, so that she can still be the Harriette she wants to be, not the silly Blossom that everyone thinks her. If this flippancy seems unjust, Miss Glaspell has brought it on her own head. Her touch is light when she is not being didactic; her characters have many ingratiating qualities, her mise en scène is bright and attractive, she is in many ways a skilful writer. But she tells too much.

A Second Elizabethan Journal. By G. B. Harrison. Richard R. Smith. $6.

Mr. Harrison continues in this volume the work he began in "An Elizabethan Journal (1591-1594)." His scheme is, writing more or less in the first person, to construct such a record as any intelligent and informed Elizabethan might have left of the things most talked about in his world. The present volume goes from 1595 to 1598, and more will presumably follow. The documentation—literary, political, criminal, social—is careful, as the notes will prove, and the result is an exceedingly valuable picture of the England which Shakespeare, for instance, heard and beheld around him.

Unrest: The Rebel Poets' Anthology for 1930. Edited by Ralph Cheyney and Jack Conroy. Columbus, Ohio: Studies Publications. $1.

"Unrest" for 1930 resembles the unrest pictured in a number of other anthologies; the poems included are not any better or any worse than most poems attempting to bring about social and economic reform. The two editors inform us on the cover of the book that this particular collection is dangerous and should be suppressed. We cannot agree with them; there is too little good poetry here, too much sentimentalism for the book to arouse anyone to action. Although, generally speaking, poetry and propaganda do not merge, there have been, and yet may be, great poets moved to set down their reactions to an unjust world and to try to bring that world nearer to some perfection. The trouble is not with the amount of social unrest, but with the poets. Let there be better poets and an anthology of this kind will become "dangerous" and significant.

Easier Motherhood. By Constance Todd. The John Day Company. $2.

Mrs. Todd is rightly exercised over the unnecessary suffering of childbirth. She has been at great trouble to discover how generally this suffering is still permitted in the United States; she has made herself familiar, with scientific precision unusual in a layman, with the details of one of the methods of reducing the pains of labor; and she has made the most careful inquiry as to the extent to which this method has been adopted. The so-called Gwathmey technique, by which the most severe pains during childbirth are alleviated although there is no interference with the necessary muscular control, was first tried in the New York Lying-in Hospital some eight years ago. It has since spread to a number of hospitals and is used by many obstetricians throughout the country. Mrs. Todd's contention is that it is the simplest and most effective of all methods of alleviating labor pains, that it can be used by any general practitioner or midwife, that it is not expensive, and that hence it should be in universal use. The matter is perhaps not quite so simple as this; there are more obstacles in the way of using the method than her enthusiasm for it will admit, nor is it usable in as many cases. But there is no denying the necessity for a far wider acceptance of the general principle that some lessening of the agony of child-bearing is not only desirable but possible and safe. If her book will serve to attract the attention of prospective mothers to the subject, to give them confidence that something may be done

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for them and that some doctors are willing and able to do it, their demand on the medical profession will result in a changed attitude. Doctors—even some of the best of them—have been too long prone to regard the sufferings of labor as "natural," "inevitable," and "right." This point of view is changing more slowly than it should, and Mrs. Todd's book may very well be a long push in the right direction.

Plays of the Restoration and Eighteenth Century. Edited by Dougald MacMillan and Howard Mumford Jones. Henry Holt and Company. $4.

A well-printed and intelligently edited collection of twenty-four English plays from Davenant's "Siege of Rhodes" to Kotzebue's "The Stranger" (in Benjamin Thompson's translation). No available collection better illustrates the history of the London stage during the period covered.

The Industrial Revolution in the South. By Broadus Mitchell and George S. Mitchell. The Johns Hopkins Press. $2.75.

This book is an admirable answer to the complacency and cruelty of those Southern chambers of commerce which advertise the South as the paradise of contented workers. It is written not by Northern agitators but by Southern economists who love and hate their homeland with the ambivalence of disillusioned native sons. The Mitchell brothers in a series of essays trace the rise of the cotton-manufacturing industry in the South, the birth of the labor movement, the great strikes at Elizabethton, Marion, and Gastonia, and the reaction of the new economic life upon culture and religion. They rejoice in the passing of the old South because it meant "luxury for a tiny minority" and "social starvation for a subjected majority," but they insist that the new South can never gain economic maturity while its workers get $11 a week and its manufacturers base their industrial policies upon egoism and sugar-coated philanthropy. In between the sections of solid economic analysis the authors have sandwiched some brilliant portraits of Southern types and a caustic comment upon the church.

Art

Caricature and Peggy Bacon

CARICATURE at its purest, "characature," is a very civilized sort of portraiture. Despite its ironism and exaggeration, it remains "a pictorial representation, through the emphasis of selected traits, of physical or mental characteristics; a representation of character through form." As such, it prerequires character in the subject and the capacity for the divination of character in the artist. Now, character and consciousness are both effects of high civilization. The ethical traits distinguishing individuals can scarcely fix themselves and grow dominant in a world without order, stability, values. As for the capacity to divine personality, to infer from traits of visage and conduct the virtues, vices, and passions in concordance with them, it certainly cannot be conceived unaccompanied by experience of life, and insight, sensitivity, sophistication. High civilization, in other words, is the very condition of "characature"; almost its creator.

Hence the scarcity of excellent work of this sort in America, where a civilization has not yet taken form. The grand American scene is curiously peopled with masks concealing fluid, uncertain, unknown beings. At times, to pass through your typically energetic, healthy, bright American crowd is to go among innumerable borrowed, second-hand, ill-fitting faces; wax imprints taken from heads that were parts and indicators of personalities, heroic personalities; now attached to organisms with which they have no relation, and upon which they lead a strangely abstract and parasitic existence. The blond flashing mask of Siegfried advances through the throng, clapped upon a sort of life and idea quite incongruous with it: perhaps the habits and ambitions of an automobile salesman. Cleopatra's and Lucrezia Borgia's dark, glamorous, fatal visages appear on gentle, timid girls; Gretchen's sweet flaxen countenance upon a person made of the finest bathroom porcelain. All the immensely characteristic archetypes present themselves, Byron's face, and Mephisto's, and the boy David's, and Mona Lisa's, and the Countess Potocka's; indeed, the entire historic, literary, and operatic repertory's: and yet we know that these expressions of passion and villainy, elfishness, inscrutability, devotion have a lesser kinship to the illustrious bundles of nerves and impulses after which we call them than a poor copy of a masterpiece has to the original painting, or the degenerate descendant of a great family to his puissant forebears. The new character has not yet developed; nature would appear to be marking time, waiting upon a new force or direction, a new organization of psychological traits, emptily repeating past expressions. Bare or almost bare of the sense of whatever it is they are, these perfectly amiable people exaggerate their superficial resemblances to past types, seizing upon the glass of a borrowed effect because the brilliance of an individuality, a character, is not theirs.

Of course, what commonly passes for caricature among us is not "characatural" at all. It is a mere amassing of objects of ridicule and distaste without artistic penetration, an overloading of portraits in the manner of Sinclair Lewis, an extreme exaggeration of peculiarities and defects. Each month the *New Masses* regales us with a banquet of pretexts for resentments; and even so diverting an art as Peter Arno's is not free of the effects of the tendency to "throw off" on people. The refreshment flowing from a show such as Peggy Bacon's recent one at the Downtown Gallery, with its sense of civilization, of advancing order and illumination, is therefore readily comprehensible.

For Peggy Bacon is that urbane thing, a witty portraitist, a natural "characaturist." One is obliged to return to the "material, relative, and absolute" caricatures of the brilliant and bitter Marius de Zayas to find examples of her sort of art more daring and distinguished than her own. And in the time that has elapsed since the appearances of these sparse masterpieces, no one has brought a greater wit and penetration to caricature than she, or expressed Aristophanic comedy through a happier artistic medium. Her spirit is ironical, but without malice. Her passionless vision finds neither grandeur nor exquisiteness in things, but chiefly a lavish clumsiness, a grand ineptitude. Her stage is full of uncouth, shaggy males charging at typewriters and drawing-boards with all the daintiness of stampeding elephants; of great masculine boots that manage to plant themselves fatally, irrevocably in the middle of white picnic cloths; of noses that are somehow too long and eyes and jawbones somehow too wide. She sees shortsighted critics innocently sticking their burning cigar ends into the paintings they are examining; she spies unfortunate masculine nostrils of a width and fierceness unable to produce anything but fright in the feminine observer, and beside them terrified eyeballs like panicky horses', communicating their own fright and intensifying the unfortunate effects of the grosser organs. Friendly visages come before her retina set upon bodies that grotesquely, platitudinously protrude; many kindly, attractive spirits compromised by some demon that will let nothing be quite successful, and makes all things quite pleasantly, pardonably, risibly, to fall short. Yet there is no ugliness in Miss Bacon's conceptions, but much good nature, patience, humor, a

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little weariness, and something which in unguarded moments verges dangerously closely upon tenderness. It is said that many of her well-known virile sitters have been disaffected by her portraits of themselves, accusing her of an overmastering desire to be funny. But that in itself is but another American subject for "characature."

All this sense of the personality and significance of people reaches her quite wittily, stenographically, in concentrated form. The color of an eye or a complexion, the play of fingers in a gesture, the knot of a horrid little butterfly necktie, have summarized a quality of life sharply and humorously for her. One of her most consummate portraits is built around a gilt chain hooking eyeglasses to an ear; and in that transit from glass to ear and back again, short as the trajectory of a Toonerville trolley, a whole dry academism, prissiness, impossibility has lain exposed before her. And all this quintessence of things is reproduced, recorded, expressed by her in the manipulations of her medium. Her feeling of things is directly communicated through it, reaching us like a physical presence, an object, in the play of line and hue. Miss Bacon is an able draftsman, a charming, often extremely gifted colorist. It is possible to regard the best of her pastels as paintings, and to be satisfied by their paint quality. Some of her portraits, such as the Charles Sheeler, the Murdock Pemberton, the Heywood Broun, the Kenneth Hayes Miller, and the Mrs. Halpert, are completed little works of art. And it is significant that she is most the artist where she is most true to the spirit of "characature." Her less interesting color effects usually are found in combination with her less subtle realizations of character, themselves in turn due to the interference of some antipathy, some personal feeling. Here, her gravest faults, such as a tendency to monotony in the handling of flesh, become obtrusive. Nor is it always the inferior subject which eludes her. Fortunately, she has a steady fund of sympathy, playful, mocking, wonderfully keen, whatever her critical sitters may say; large enough in any case to have given us distinguished examples of her rare and desirable form.

PAUL ROSENFELD

Music

The Bach Festival

IF the contending factions of the Bethlehem Steel Corporation stockholders would like to make a settlement out of court, I can recommend an excellent piece of institutional advertising to which a small fraction of the bonus money might well be devoted. Although the Bethlehem Bach Choir boasts the names of Schwab and Grace on its committees, they are really not getting their money's worth. For it is perfectly clear that whatever distinction the annual Bach festival possesses is to be credited to Dr. J. Fred Wolle, its conductor, and just as clear that its faults and lacks are due, chiefly, to the stinginess of its guarantors.

Just what these guarantors pay for is something of a mystery. Neither Dr. Wolle's salary nor his bonus, I take it, is an immense burden. The rent is free. The copies of the B-minor Mass can be used over and over again, since it is done every year. Eight or ten cantatas cannot be very expensive. Obviously not an extra cent is wasted on the orchestra, which reads nine-tenths of the music at sight, and manages to efface every memory of how it sounded last year. Obviously, too, the soloists are inexpensive; or, if they are not, the guarantors are being cheated. The church, moreover, is not small, and good money is charged for the seats, every one of which is always taken.

Mr. Schwab may be, as Will Rogers told him, "the greatest sucker on earth"; but in the case of the Bach festival he could be less of a sucker by being more of one. Of the million a year he has been putting into Bethlehem, very little, apparently, has crept up the hill to the festival.

The Bach Choir itself is in no way a disappointment. It is as good a chorus as I have ever heard, and this is the more remarkable when you remember that it is recruited locally and that its members are not even in contact with musical experience except by radio and through Dr. Wolle. For his part in the festival praise must be unqualified. Out of what is surely not exceptionally promising material, either vocally or musically, he has created a chorus of immense tonal resource and sensitive musicianship. His conducting is a compound of everything admirable: authority, imagination, fire, restraint, architectural sense, virtuosity in choral manipulation—he combines them all in proportions that leave little to be desired. Moments like the opening of the Kyrie and of the Sanctus, in the Bethlehem performance of the Mass, are all too rare. He can produce a stirring allegro that marches, as well as an immensely sonorous, leisurely, and alive adagio. The quality of his choir's tone is excellent, and its quantity great. It is accurate as to pitch and rhythm, precise in its diction, sensitive in its response to Dr. Wolle's suggestion.

Dr. Wolle, by the way, is the perfect example of the conductor whose work has been done almost completely in rehearsal, so that hardly anything more than his mere presence is needed to remind the chorus of what it is to do. This was particularly fortunate this year, as illness had weakened him to such an extent that he probably could not otherwise have gone through with it. It was, at the same time, particularly unfortunate as regards the orchestra and the soloists. Dr. Wolle, whose work is exclusively with one chorus, with which he is therefore intimately acquainted, has naturally some eccentricities of beat and the like which are well understood by the chorus, but which are at times not entirely clear to an unrehearsed orchestra. His tempi, too, sometimes diverge widely from habitual ones. Consequently orchestra musicians who are not forewarned must not be blamed for starting an *alla breve* movement twice as fast as is intended, as happened once, or for mixing things up generally, as happened very often. Why the local organist should get as much as two beats behind or ahead of the rest of the performance at times remains unplained, and the lethargy of the first oboist should bar from future festival appearances.

Not even rehearsals would save most of the soloists: some were worse than others, so perhaps there is no need to mention names. They were handicapped at the cantata program on Friday by having to sing English words to music that is intimately tied, both by sense and by rhythm, to German. But the original Latin of the Mass did not seem to help them much on Saturday. Why the Mass should be sung in Latin and the German cantatas in English, when some of the most expressive music of the latter is fitted to recitatives whose inflection determines its whole contour, perhaps Dr. Wolle can say. Translation of song texts is always and everywhere an unsatisfactory and an unmusical process; and it is nowhere more so than in Bach.

If the cantatas could be sung in the original, if the orchestra could agree on the tempo and the pitch, if the soloists could agree with the orchestra on both these matters and—if they must sing English—decide whether to sing "tern," "töhn," "tarn," or "torn" for "turn," and if everyone could go through all the music once or twice, say, before the performance, the festival would be even better than it is. That, even with its serious faults, it is so rich and deep an experience is due to the work of Dr. Wolle, alone and apparently almost unassisted.

ARTHUR MENDEL

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Drama

Old Irish

THIS is the season when farces abound, for however dolorous and damp the spring may be there is always a summer coming during which loud, easy laughter will be in order. Not that such a demand is easy to meet. Now also is the time when the public decides just which farces out of so many will be allowed to live on into the hot months. Judging by the reception it got as early as its second night, Patrick Kearney's "Old Man Murphy" (Royale Theater) is already assured of life until cold weather comes again. But I should not be surprised if it ran a year or two. It is hard to imagine, short of plague or fire or the sinking of Manhattan, what would stop it. I have rarely heard such a volume of laughter as greeted this piece, and I have rarely been so much amused myself.

Not that "Old Man Murphy" is without defect, and not that it isn't forced in places. But Mr. Kearney, assisted in the writing by Harry Wagstaff Gribble, who also directs, has found a comic region lying halfway between Lady Gregory and Ann Nichols, and this appears to be a region of great promise. The influence of Lady Gregory is felt in the healthiness of the observation and in the flavor of the Irish dialogue. The author of "Abie's Irish Rose," on the other hand, has inspired a removal of the scene to America and an emphasis throughout upon the particular brand of patriotism which we find in Irishmen whenever they compare themselves with other races, the other races in this case being the English and the Jewish, with a third and more important one added, the renegade Irish. For the story is chiefly about an Irish-American family who have tried to conceal their origin in order to get on in the society of a Middle Western city, and the fun is extracted from situations which expose them to both the ridicule and scorn of those of their countrymen who have remained faithful. Charles Murphy, unable to conquer his wife's ambition, has changed his name to Murfree and has pretended to come from Tennessee. Now, however, on the eve of his election as mayor, comes his father, Old Man Murphy, from Ireland to manage the campaign. Old Man Murphy does more than that. He brings confusion to Mrs. Murfree (born Mary Mulligan), and, what with much brogue and Irish whiskey and going to wakes, he brings occasion for constant laughter to the audience.

The part is played by Arthur Sinclair, who was Mr. Gilhooley in the play by that name which failed last fall. Two roles could scarcely be farther apart, yet Mr. Sinclair has brought them somehow into the single circle of his excellence; the season for him, therefore, is distinctly a success. His acting, with that of Maire O'Neill as the Widow Donovan and that of Lawrence O'Sullivan as Larry Heffernan, has doubtless a great deal to do with the triumph of "Old Man Murphy." But it would be a triumph anyway, considering the story it tells and the prejudice it so warmly and cleverly exploits.

The Civic Light Opera Company was so well received in "The Mikado" that it has decided to give during the next few months not only "The Gondoliers" and "Patience," as originally announced, but "The Pirates of Penzance," "Iolanthe," and "Ruddigore." At present the bill is "H.M.S. Pinafore" (Erlanger's Theater), with Frank Moulan as Sir Joseph, William Danforth as Dick Deadeye, William C. Gordon as Bill Bobstay, and Fay Templeton as Little Buttercup. These veterans disport themselves magnificently, of course, and the evenings on Forty-fourth Street continue happily to pass. The summer promises well indeed.

MARK VAN DOREN

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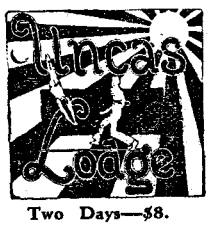

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